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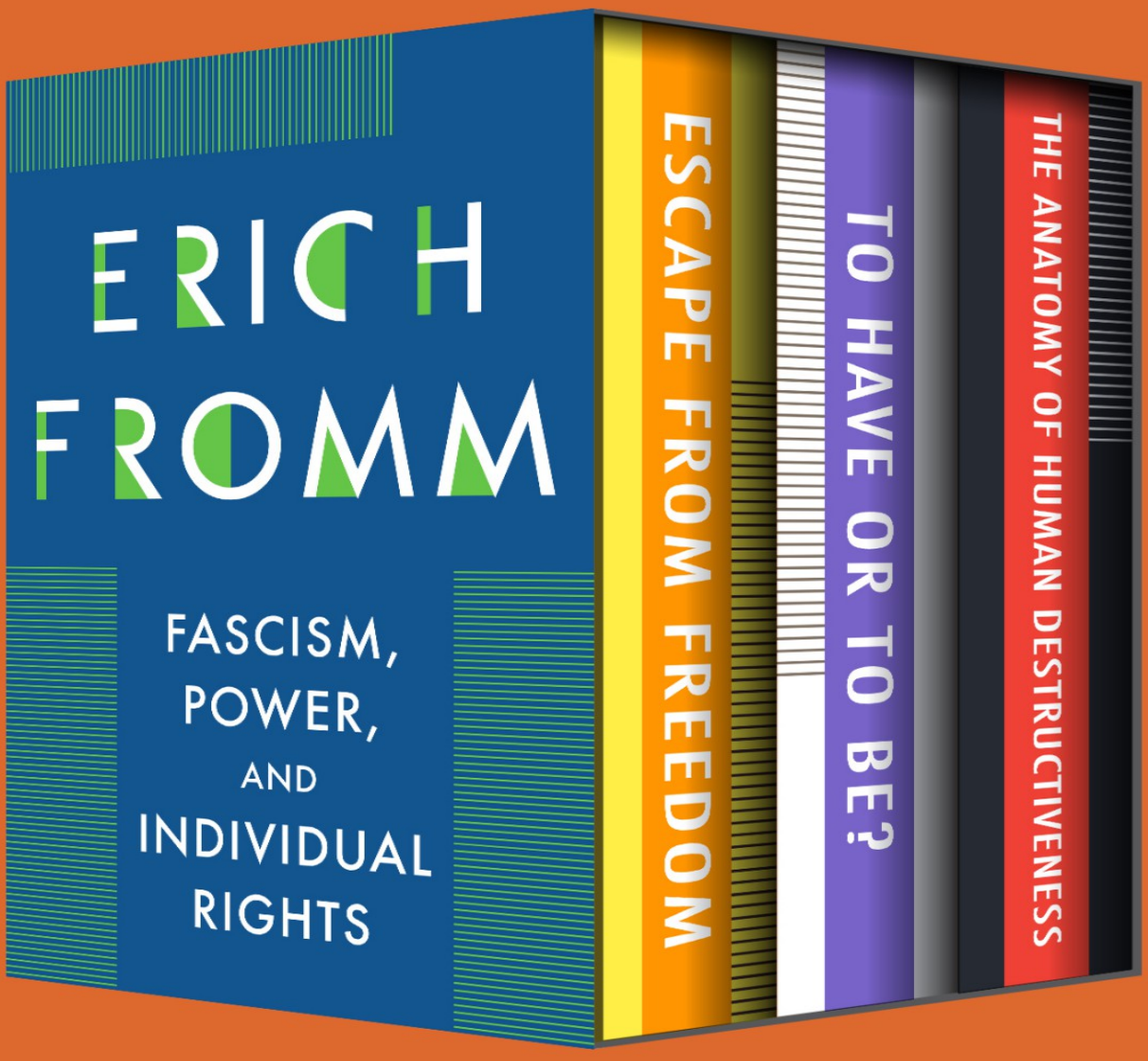

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Fascism, Power, and Individual Rights

Escape from Freedom, To Have or To Be?, and The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness

Erich Fromm

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A Biography of Erich Fromm

NEW YORK *TIMES*–BESTSELLING AUTHOR

ERICH FROMM

ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM

Escape from Freedom

Erich Fromm

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If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
If I am for myself only, what am I?
If not now—when?

Talmudic Saying

Mishnah, Abot

Neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal have we created thee, so that thou mightest be free according to thy own will and honor, to be thy own creator and builder. To thee alone we gave growth and development depending on thy own free will. Thou bearest in thee the germs of a universal life.

Pico della Mirandola

Oratio de Hominis Dignitate

Nothing then is unchangeable but the inherent and inalienable rights of man.

Thomas Jefferson

Foreword

This book is part of a broad study concerning the character structure of modern man and the problems of the interaction between psychological and sociological factors which I have been working on for several years and completion of which would have taken considerably longer. Present political developments and the dangers which they imply for the greatest achievements of modern culture—individuality and uniqueness of personality—made me decide to interrupt the work on the larger study and concentrate on one aspect of it which is crucial for the cultural and social crisis of our day: the meaning of freedom for modern man. My task in this book would be easier could I refer the reader to the completed study of the character structure of man in our culture, since the meaning of freedom can be fully understood only on the basis of an analysis of the whole character structure of modern man. As it is, I have had to refer frequently to certain concepts and conclusions without elaborating on them as fully as I would have done with more scope. In regard to other problems of great importance, I have often been able to mention them only in passing and sometimes not at all. But I feel that the psychologist should offer what he has to contribute to the understanding of the present crisis without delay, even though he must sacrifice the desideratum of completeness.

Pointing out the significance of psychological considerations in relation to the present scene does not imply, in my opinion, an overestimation of psychology. The basic entity of the social process is the individual, his desires and fears, his passions and reason, his propensities for good and for evil. To understand the dynamics of the social process we must understand the dynamics of the psychological processes operating within the individual, just as to understand the individual we must see him in the context of the culture which molds him. It is the thesis of this book that modern man, freed from the bonds of pre-individualistic society, which simultaneously gave him security and limited him, has not gained freedom in the positive sense of the realization of his individual self; that is, the expression of his intellectual, emotional and sensuous potentialities.

Freedom, though it has brought him independence and rationality, has made him isolated and, thereby, anxious and powerless. This isolation is unbearable and the alternatives he is confronted with are either to escape from the burden of his freedom into new dependencies and submission, or to advance to the full realization of positive freedom which is based upon the uniqueness and individuality of man. Although this book is a diagnosis rather than a prognosis—an analysis rather than a solution—its results have a bearing on our course of action. For, the understanding of the reasons for the totalitarian flight from freedom is a premise for any action which aims at the victory over the totalitarian forces.

I forego the pleasure it would be to thank all those friends, colleagues and students to whom I am indebted for their stimulation and constructive criticisms of my own thinking. The reader will see in the footnotes reference to the authors of whom I feel most indebted for the ideas expressed in this book. However, I wish to acknowledge specifically my gratitude to those who have contributed directly to the completion of this volume. In the first place, I wish to thank Miss Elizabeth Brown, who both by her suggestions and her criticisms has been of invaluable help in the organization of this volume. Furthermore, my thanks are due to Mr. T. Woodhouse for his great help in editing the manuscript and to Dr. A. Seidemann for his help in the philosophical problems touched upon in this book.

I wish to thank the following publishers for the privilege of using extensive passages from their publications: Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia, excerpts from *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* by John Calvin, translated by John Allen; the Columbia Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law (Columbia University Press), New York, excerpts from *Social Reform and the Reformation,* by Jacob S. Schapiro; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., excerpts from *The Bondage of the Will,* by Martin Luther, translated by Henry Cole; Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, excerpts from *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism,* by R. H. Tawney; Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, excerpts from *Mein Kampf,* by Adolf Hitler; the Macmillan Company, New York, excerpts from *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy,* by Jacob Burckhardt.

E. F.

Foreword II

Almost twenty-five years have passed since the first edition of this book was published. The twenty-four editions which have been published since then have been read by professionals, laymen, and especially by students, and I am happy that this publication in the Avon Library will make it more easily available to many more readers.

Escape from Freedom is an analysis of the phenomenon of man's anxiety engendered by the breakdown of the Medieval World in which, in spite of many dangers, he felt himself secure and safe. After centuries of struggles, man succeeded in building an undreamed-of wealth of material goods; he built democratic societies in parts of the world, and recently was victorious in defending himself against new totalitarian schemes; yet, as the analysis in *Escape from Freedom* attempts to show, modern man still is anxious and tempted to surrender his freedom to dictators of all kinds, or to lose it by transforming himself into a small cog in the machine, well fed, and well clothed, yet not a free man but an automaton.

After twenty-five years, the question is in order whether the social and psychological trends on which the analysis of this book was based have continued to exist, or whether they have tended to diminish. There can be no doubt that in this last quarter of a century the reasons for man's fear of freedom, for his anxiety and willingness to become an automaton, have not only continued but have greatly increased. The most important event in this respect is the discovery of atomic energy, and its possible use as a weapon of destruction. Never before in history has the human race been confronted with total annihilation, least of all through the work of its own hands. Yet only a relatively short time ago, during the Cuban crisis, hundreds of millions of human beings in America and in Europe for a few days did not know whether they and their children were ever to see another day in spite of the fact that since then attempts have been made to reduce the danger of a similar crisis, the destructive weapons still exist, the buttons are there, the men charged with pushing them when necessity seems to command it are there, anxiety and helplessness are still there.

Aside from the nuclear revolution, the cybernetic revolution has developed more rapidly than many could have foreseen twenty-five years ago. We are entering the second industrial revolution in which not only human physical energy—man's hands and arms as it were—but also his brain and his nervous reactions are being replaced by machines. In the most developed industrial countries such as the United States, new anxieties develop because of the threat of increasing structural unemployment; man feels still smaller when confronted with the phenomenon not only of giant enterprises, but of an almost self-regulating world of computers which think much faster, and often more correctly, than he does. Another danger has increased, rather than diminished: the population explosion. Here, too, one of the products of human progress, the achievements of medicine, have produced such an increase of population, especially in the underdeveloped countries, that the increase in material production can hardly keep pace with the increasing number of people.

The giant forces in society and the danger for man's survival have increased in these twenty-five years, and hence man's tendency to escape from freedom. Yet there are also hopeful signs. The dictatorships of Hitler and Stalin have disappeared. In the Soviet bloc, especially in the smaller states, although they have remained ultra-conservative and totalitarian, a trend for increasing liberalization is clearly visible. The United States has shown itself resistant against all totalitarian attempts to gain influence. Important steps toward the political and social liberation of the Negroes have been taken, all the more impressive because of the courage and discipline of those in the forefront of the fighting for Negro freedom—both Negroes and whites. All these facts show that the drive for freedom inherent in human nature, while it can be corrupted and suppressed, tends to assert itself again and again. Yet all these reassuring facts must not deceive us into thinking that the dangers of "escape from freedom" are not as great, or even greater today than they were when this book was first published.

Does this prove that theoretical insights of social psychology are useless, as far as their effect on human development is concerned? It is hard to answer this question convincingly, and the writer in this field may be unduly optimistic about the social value of his own and his colleagues' work. But with all due respect to this possibility, my belief in the importance of awareness of individual and social reality has, if anything, grown. I can briefly state why this is so. It becomes ever increasingly clear

to many students of man and of the contemporary scene that the crucial difficulty with which we are confronted lies in the fact that the development of man's intellectual capacities has far outstripped the development of his emotions. Man's brain lives in the twentieth century; the heart of most men lives still in the Stone Age. The majority of men have not yet acquired the maturity to be independent, to be rational, to be objective. They need myths and idols to endure the fact that man is all by himself, that there is no authority which gives meaning to life except man himself. Man represses the irrational passions of destructiveness, hate, envy, revenge; he worships power, money, the sovereign state, the nation; while he pays lip service to the teachings of the great spiritual leaders of the human race, those of Buddha, the prophets, Socrates, Jesus, Mohammed—he has transformed these teachings into a jungle of superstition and idol-worship. How can mankind save itself from destroying itself by this discrepancy between intellectual-technical overmaturity and emotional backwardness?

As far as I can see there is only one answer: the increasing awareness of the most essential facts of our social existence, an awareness sufficient to prevent us from committing irreparable follies, and to raise to some small extent our capacity for objectivity and reason. We can not hope to overcome most follies of the heart and their detrimental influence on our imagination and thought in one generation; maybe it will take a thousand years until man has lifted himself from a pre-human history of hundreds of thousands of years. At this crucial moment, however, a modicum of increased insight —objectivity—can make the difference between life and death for the human race. For this reason the development of a scientific and dynamic social psychology is of vital importance. Progress in social psychology is necessary to counteract the dangers which arise from the progress in physics and medicine.

No one could be more aware of the inadequacy of our knowledge than the students in this field. It is my hope that books such as this may stimulate students to devote their energies to this field by showing them the need for this type of investigation, and at the same time that we are lacking almost everything but the foundations.

I might be expected to answer one more question; should I make any extensive revisions in my theoretical conclusions after twenty-five years? I must confess that I believe that all essential elements of this analysis are still valid; that what they need is expansion and interpretation in many

directions. I have tried to do some of this work myself since I wrote *Escape from Freedom.* In *The Sane Society* I amplified and deepened the analysis of contemporary society; in *Man for Himself* I developed the theme of ethical norms based on our knowledge of man, rather than on authority and revelation; in *The Art of Loving* I analyzed the various aspects of love; in *The Heart of Man* I followed up the roots of destructiveness and hate; in *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* I analyzed the relationship between the thoughts of the two great theorists of a dynamic science of man: Marx and Freud.

I hope that this edition of *Escape from Freedom* will continue to contribute to increasing the interest in the field of dynamic social psychology, and to stimulate younger people to devote their interest to a field which is full of intellectual excitement, precisely because it is only at its beginning.

Erich Fromm

I FREEDOM—A PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM?

Modern European and American history is centered around the effort to gain freedom from the political, economic, and spiritual shackles that have bound men. The battles for freedom were fought by the oppressed, those who wanted new liberties, against those who had privileges to defend. While a class was fighting for its own liberation from domination, it believed itself to be fighting for human freedom as such and thus was able to appeal to an ideal, to the longing for freedom rooted in all who are oppressed. In the long and virtually continuous battle for freedom, however, classes that were fighting against oppression at one stage sided with the enemies of freedom when victory was won and new privileges were to be defended.

Despite many reverses, freedom has won battles. Many died in those battles in the conviction that to die in the struggle against oppression was better than to live without freedom. Such a death was the utmost assertion of their individuality. History seemed to be proving that it was possible for man to govern himself, to make decisions for himself, and to think and feel as he saw fit. The full expression of man's potentialities seemed to be the goal toward which social development was rapidly approaching. The principles of economic liberalism, political democracy, religious autonomy, and individualism in personal life, gave expression to the longing for freedom, and at the same time seemed to bring mankind nearer to its realization. One tie after another was severed. Man had overthrown the domination of nature and made himself her master; he had overthrown the domination of the Church and the domination of the absolutist state. The *abolition of external domination* seemed to be not only a necessary but also a sufficient condition to attain the cherished goal: freedom of the individual.

The First World War was regarded by many as the final struggle and its conclusion the ultimate victory for freedom. Existing democracies appeared strengthened, and new ones replaced old monarchies. But only a few years

elapsed before new systems emerged which denied everything that men believed they had won in centuries of struggle. For the essence of these new systems, which effectively took command of man's entire social and personal life, was the submission of all but a handful of men to an authority over which they had no control.

At first many found comfort in the thought that the victory of the authoritarian system was due to the madness of a few individuals and that their madness would lead to their downfall in due time. Others smugly believed that the Italian people, or the Germans, were lacking in a sufficiently long period of training in democracy, and that therefore one could wait complacently until they had reached the political maturity of the Western democracies. Another common illusion, perhaps the most dangerous of all, was that men like Hitler had gained power over the vast apparatus of the state through nothing but cunning and trickery, that they and their satellites ruled merely by sheer force; that the whole population was only the will-less object of betrayal and terror.

In the years that have elapsed since, the fallacy of these arguments has become apparent. We have been compelled to recognize that millions in Germany were as eager to surrender their freedom as their fathers were to fight for it; that instead of wanting freedom, they sought for ways of escape from it; that other millions were indifferent and did not believe the defense of freedom to be worth fighting and dying for. We also recognize that the crisis of democracy is not a peculiarly Italian or German problem, but one confronting every modern state. Nor does it matter which symbols the enemies of human freedom choose: freedom is not less endangered if attacked in the name of anti-Fascism than in that of outright Fascism.[1] This truth has been so forcefully formulated by John Dewey that I express the thought in his words: "The serious threat to our democracy," he says, "is not the existence of foreign totalitarian states. It is the existence within our own personal attitudes and within our own institutions of conditions which have given a victory to external authority, discipline, uniformity and dependence upon The Leader in foreign countries. The battlefield is also accordingly here—within ourselves and our institutions."[2]

If we want to fight Fascism we must understand it. Wishful thinking will not help us. And reciting optimistic formulae will prove to be as inadequate and useless as the ritual of an Indian rain dance.

In addition to the problem of the economic and social conditions which have given rise to Fascism, there is a human problem which needs to be understood. It is the purpose of this book to analyze those dynamic factors in the character structure of modern man, which made him want to give up freedom in Fascist countries and which so widely prevail in millions of our own people.

These are the outstanding questions that arise when we look at the human aspect of freedom, the longing for submission, and the lust for power: What is freedom as a human experience? Is the desire for freedom something inherent in human nature? Is it an identical experience regardless of what kind of culture a person lives in, or is it something different according to the degree of individualism reached in a particular society? Is freedom only the absence of external pressure or is it also the *presence* of something—and if so, of what? What are the social and economic factors in society that make for the striving for freedom? Can freedom become a burden, too heavy for man to bear, something he tries to escape from? Why then is it that freedom is for many a cherished goal and for others a threat?

Is there not also, perhaps, besides an innate desire for freedom, an instinctive wish for submission? If there is not, how can we account for the attraction which submission to a leader has for so many today? Is submission always to an overt authority, or is there also submission to internalized authorities, such as duty or conscience, to inner compulsions or to anonymous authorities like public opinion? Is there a hidden satisfaction in submitting, and what is its essence?

What is it that creates in men an insatiable lust for power? Is it the strength of their vital energy—or is it a fundamental weakness and inability to experience life spontaneously and lovingly? What are the psychological conditions that make for the strength of these strivings? What are the social conditions upon which such psychological conditions in turn are based?

Analysis of the human aspect of freedom and of authoritarianism forces us to consider a general problem, namely, that of the role which psychological factors play as active forces in the social process; and this eventually leads to the problem of the interaction of psychological, economic, and ideological factors in the social process. Any attempt to understand the attraction which Fascism exercises upon great nations compels us to recognize the role of psychological factors. For we are dealing here with a political system which, essentially, does not appeal to

rational forces of self-interest, but which arouses and mobilizes diabolical forces in man which we had believed to be nonexistent, or at least to have died out long ago. The familiar picture of man in the last centuries was one of a rational being whose actions were determined by his self-interest and the ability to act according to it. Even writers like Hobbes, who recognized lust for power and hostility as driving forces in man, explained the existence of these forces as a logical result of self-interest: since men are equal and thus have the same wish for happiness, and since there is not enough wealth to satisfy them all to the same extent, they necessarily fight against each other and want power to secure the future enjoyment of what they have at present. But Hobbes's picture became outmoded. The more the middle class succeeded in breaking down the power of the former political or religious rulers, the more men succeeded in mastering nature, and the more millions of individuals became economically independent, the more did one come to believe in a rational world and in man as an essentially rational being. The dark and diabolical forces of man's nature were relegated to the Middle Ages and to still earlier periods of history, and they were explained by lack of knowledge or by the cunning schemes of deceitful kings and priests.

One looked back upon these periods as one might at a volcano which for a long time has ceased to be a menace. One felt secure and confident that the achievements of modern democracy had wiped out all sinister forces; the world looked bright and safe like the well-lit streets of a modern city. Wars were supposed to be the last relics of older times and one needed just one more war to end war; economic crises were supposed to be accidents, even though these accidents continued to happen with a certain regularity.

When Fascism came into power, most people were unprepared, both theoretically and practically. They were unable to believe that man could exhibit such propensities for evil, such lust for power, such disregard for the rights of the weak, or such yearning for submission. Only a few had been aware of the rumbling of the volcano preceding the outbreak. Nietzsche had disturbed the complacent optimism of the nineteenth century; so had Marx in a different way. Another warning had come somewhat later from Freud. To be sure, he and most of his disciples had only a very naive notion of what goes on in society, and most of his applications of psychology to social problems were misleading constructions; yet, by devoting his interest

to the phenomena of individual emotional and mental disturbances, he led us to the top of the volcano and made us look into the boiling crater.

Freud went further than anybody before him in directing attention to the observation and analysis of the irrational and unconscious forces which determine parts of human behavior. He and his followers in modern psychology not only uncovered the irrational and unconscious sector of man's nature, the existence of which had been neglected by modern rationalism; he also showed that these irrational phenomena followed certain laws and therefore could be understood rationally. He taught us to understand the language of dreams and somatic symptoms as well as the irrationalities in human behavior. He discovered that these irrationalities as well as the whole character structure of an individual were reactions to the influences exercised by the outside world and particularly by those occurring in early childhood.

But Freud was so imbued with the spirit of his culture that he could not go beyond certain limits which were set by it. These very limits became limitations for his understanding even of the sick individual; they handicapped his understanding of the normal individual and of the irrational phenomena operating in social life.

Since this book stresses the role of psychological factors in the whole of the social process and since this analysis is based on some of the fundamental discoveries of Freud—particularly those concerning the operation of unconscious forces in man's character and their dependence on external influences—I think it will be helpful to the reader to know from the outset some of the general principles of our approach, and also the main differences between this approach and the classical Freudian concepts.[3]

Freud accepted the traditional belief in a basic dichotomy between man and society, as well as the traditional doctrine of the evilness of human nature. Man, to him, is fundamentally antisocial. Society must domesticate him, must allow some direct satisfaction of biological—and hence, ineradicable—drives; but for the most part society must refine and adroitly check man's basic impulses. In consequence of this suppression of natural impulses by society something miraculous happens: the suppressed drives turn into strivings that are culturally valuable and thus become the human basis for culture. Freud chose the word sublimation for this strange transformation from suppression into civilized behavior. If the amount of suppression is greater than the capacity for sublimation, individuals become

neurotic and it is necessary to allow the lessening of suppression. Generally, however, there is a reverse relation between satisfaction of man's drives and culture: the more suppression, the more culture (and the more danger of neurotic disturbances). The relation of the individual to society in Freud's theory is essentially a static one: the individual remains virtually the same and becomes changed only in so far as society exercises greater pressure on his natural drives (and thus enforces more sublimation) or allows more satisfaction (and thus sacrifices culture).

Like the so-called basic instincts of man which earlier psychologists accepted, Freud's conception of human nature was essentially a reflection of the most important drives to be seen in modern man. For Freud, the individual of his culture represented "man," and those passions and anxieties that are characteristic for man in modern society were looked upon as eternal forces rooted in the biological constitution of man.

While we could give many illustrations of this point (as, for instance, the social basis for the hostility prevalent today in modern man, the Oedipus complex, the so-called castration complex in women), I want only to give one more illustration which is particularly important because it concerns the whole concept of man as a social being. Freud always considers the individual in his relations to others. These relations as Freud sees them, however, are similar to the economic relations to others which are characteristic of the individual in capitalist society. Each person works for himself, individualistically, at his own risk, and not primarily in co-operation with others. But he is not a Robinson Crusoe; he needs others, as customers, as employees, or as employers. He must buy and sell, give and take. The market, whether it is the commodity or the labor market, regulates these relations. Thus the individual, primarily alone and self-sufficient, enters into economic relations with others as means to one end: to sell and to buy. Freud's concept of human relations is essentially the same: the individual appears fully equipped with biologically given drives, which need to be satisfied. In order to satisfy them, the individual enters into relations with other *"objects." Other* individuals thus are always a means to one's end, the satisfaction of strivings which in themselves originate in the individual before he enters into contact with others. The field of human relations in Freud's sense is similar to the market—it is an exchange of satisfaction of biologically given needs, in which the relationship to the other individual is always a means to an end but never an end in itself.

Contrary to Freud's viewpoint, the analysis offered in this book is based on the assumption that the key problem of psychology is that of the specific kind of relatedness of the individual towards the world and not that of the satisfaction or frustration of this or that instinctual need *per se*; furthermore, on the assumption that the relationship between man and society is not a static one. It is not as if we had on the one hand an individual equipped by nature with certain drives and on the other, society as something apart from him, either satisfying or frustrating these innate propensities. Although there are certain needs, such as hunger, thirst, sex, which are common to man, those drives which make for the *differences* in men's characters, like love and hatred, the lust for power and the yearning for submission, the enjoyment of sensuous pleasure and the fear of it, are all products of the social process. The most beautiful as well as the most ugly inclinations of man are not part of a fixed and biologically given human nature, but result from the social process which creates man. In other words, society has not only a suppressing function—although it has that too—but it has also a creative function. Man's nature, his passions, and anxieties are a cultural product; as a matter of fact, man himself is the most important creation and achievement of the continuous human effort, the record of which we call history.

It is the very task of social psychology to understand this process of man's creation in history. Why do certain definite changes of man's character take place from one historical epoch to another? Why is the spirit of the Renaissance different from that of the Middle Ages? Why is the character structure of man in monopolistic capitalism different from that in the nineteenth century? Social psychology has to explain why new abilities and new passions, bad or good, come into existence. Thus we find, for instance, that from the Renaissance up until our day men have been filled with a burning ambition for fame, while this striving which today seems so natural was little present in man of the medieval society.[4] In the same period men developed a sense for the beauty of nature which they did not possess before.[5] Again, in the Northern European countries, from the sixteenth century on, man developed an obsessional craving to work which had been lacking in a free man before that period.

But man is not only made by history—history is made by man. The solution of this seeming contradiction constitutes the field of social psychology.[6] Its task is to show not only how passions, desires, anxieties

change and develop as a result of the social process, but also how man's energies thus shaped into specific forms in their turn become *productive forces, molding the social process.* Thus, for instance, the craving for fame and success and the drive to work are forces without which modern capitalism could not have developed; without these and a number of other human forces man would have lacked the impetus to act according to the social and economic requirements of the modern commercial and industrial system.

It follows from what we have said that the viewpoint presented in this book differs from Freud's inasmuch as it emphatically disagrees with his interpretation of history as the result of psychological forces that in themselves are not socially conditioned. It disagrees as emphatically with those theories which neglect the role of the human factor as one of the dynamic elements in the social process. This criticism is directed not only against sociological theories which explicitly wish to eliminate psychological problems from sociology (like those of Durkheim and his school), but also against those theories that are more or less tinged with behavioristic psychology. Common to all these theories is the assumption that human nature has no dynamism of its own and that psychological changes are to be understood in terms of the development of new "habits" as an adaptation to new cultural patterns. These theories, though speaking of the psychological factor, at the same time reduce it to a shadow of cultural patterns. Only a dynamic psychology, the foundations of which have been laid by Freud, can get further than paying lip service to the human factor. Though there is no fixed human nature, we cannot regard human nature as being infinitely malleable and able to adapt itself to any kind of conditions without developing a psychological dynamism of its own. Human nature, though being the product of historical evolution, has certain inherent mechanisms and laws, to discover which is the task of psychology.

At this point it seems necessary for the full understanding of what has been said so far and also of what follows to discuss the notion of *adaptation.* This discussion offers at the same time an illustration of what we mean by psychological mechanisms and laws.

It seems useful to differentiate between "static" and "dynamic" adaptation. By static adaptation we mean such an adaptation to patterns as leaves the whole character structure unchanged and implies only the

adoption of a new habit. An example of this kind of adaptation is the change from the Chinese habit of eating to the Western habit of using fork and knife. A Chinese coming to America will adapt himself to this new pattern, but this adaptation in itself has little effect on his personality; it does not arouse new drives or character traits.

By dynamic adaptation we refer to the kind of adaptation that occurs, for example, when a boy submits to the commands of his strict and threatening father—being too much afraid of him to do otherwise—and becomes a "good" boy. While he adapts himself to the necessities of the situation, something happens in him. He may develop an intense hostility against his father, which he represses, since it would be too dangerous to express it or even to be aware of it. This repressed hostility, however, though not manifest, is a dynamic factor in his character structure. It may create new anxiety and thus lead to still deeper submission; it may set up a vague defiance, directed against no one in particular but rather toward life in general. While here, too, as in the first case, an individual adapts himself to certain external circumstances, this kind of adaptation creates something new in him, arouses new drives and new anxieties. Every neurosis is an example of this dynamic adaptation; it is essentially an adaptation to such external conditions (particularly those of early childhood) as are in themselves irrational and, generally speaking, unfavorable to the growth and development of the child. Similarly, such socio-psychological phenomena as are comparable to neurotic phenomena (why they should not be called neurotic will be discussed later), like the presence of strong destructive or sadistic impulses in social groups, offer an example of dynamic adaptation to social conditions that are irrational and harmful to the development of men.

Besides the question of what *kind* of adaptation occurs, other questions need to be answered: What is it that forces man to adapt himself to almost any conceivable condition of life, and what are the limits of his adaptability?

In answering these questions the first phenomenon we have to discuss is the fact that there are certain sectors in man's nature that are more flexible and adaptable than others. Those strivings and character traits by which men differ from each other show a great amount of elasticity and malleability: love, destructiveness, sadism, the tendency to submit, the lust for power, detachment, the desire for self-aggrandizement, the passion for

thrift, the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, and the fear of sensuality. These and many other strivings and fears to be found in man develop as a reaction to certain life conditions. They are not particularly flexible, for once they have become part of a person's character, they do not easily disappear or change into some other drive. But they are flexible in the sense that individuals, particularly in their childhood, develop the one or other need according to the whole mode of life they find themselves in. None of these needs is fixed and rigid as if it were an innate part of human nature which develops and has to be satisfied under all circumstances.

In contrast to those needs, there are others which are an indispensable part of human nature and imperatively need satisfaction, namely, those needs that are rooted in the physiological organization of man, like hunger, thirst, the need for sleep, and so on. For each of those needs there exists a certain threshold beyond which lack of satisfaction is unbearable, and when this threshold is transcended the tendency to satisfy the need assumes the quality of an all-powerful striving. All these physiologically conditioned needs can be summarized in the notion of a need for self-preservation. This need for self-preservation is that part of human nature which needs satisfaction under all circumstances and therefore forms the primary motive of human behavior.

To put this in a simple formula: man must eat, drink, sleep, protect himself against enemies, and so forth. In order to do all this he must work and produce. "Work," however, is nothing general or abstract. Work is always concrete work, that is, a specific kind of work in a specific kind of economic system. A person may work as a slave in a feudal system, as a peasant in an Indian pueblo, as an independent businessman in capitalistic society, as a salesgirl in a modern department store, as a worker on the endless belt of a big factory. These different kinds of work require entirely different personality traits and make for different kinds of relatedness to others. When man is born, the stage is set for him. He has to eat and drink, and therefore he has to work; and this means he has to work under the particular conditions and in the ways that are determined for him by the kind of society into which he is born. Both factors, his need to live and the social system, in principle are unalterable by him as an individual, and they are the factors which determine the development of those other traits that show greater plasticity.

Thus the mode of life, as it is determined for the individual by the peculiarity of an economic system, becomes the primary factor in determining his whole character structure, because the imperative need for self-preservation forces him to accept the conditions under which he has to live. This does not mean that he cannot try, together with others, to effect certain economic and political changes; but primarily his personality is molded by the particular mode of life, as he has already been confronted with it as a child through the medium of the family, which represents all the features that are typical of a particular society or class.[7]

The physiologically conditioned needs are not the only imperative part of man's nature. There is another part just as compelling, one which is not rooted in bodily processes but in the very essence of the human mode and practice of life: the need to be related to the world outside oneself, the need to avoid aloneness. To feel completely alone and isolated leads to mental disintegration just as physical starvation leads to death. This relatedness to others is not identical with physical contact. An individual may be alone in a physical sense for many years and yet he may be related to ideas, values, or at least social patterns that give him a feeling of communion and "belonging." On the other hand, he may live among people and yet be overcome with an utter feeling of isolation, the outcome of which, if it transcends a certain limit, is the state of insanity which schizophrenic disturbances represent. This lack of relatedness to values, symbols, patterns, we may call moral aloneness and state that moral aloneness is as intolerable as the physical aloneness, or rather that physical aloneness becomes unbearable only if it implies also moral aloneness. The spiritual relatedness to the world can assume many forms; the monk in his cell who believes in God and the political prisoner kept in isolation who feels one with his fellow fighters are not alone morally. Neither is the English gentleman who wears his dinner jacket in the most exotic surroundings nor the petty bourgeois who, though being deeply isolated from his fellow men, feels one with his nation or its symbols. The kind of relatedness to the world may be noble or trivial, but even being related to the basest kind of pattern is immensely preferable to being alone. Religion and nationalism, as well as any custom and any belief however absurd and degrading, if it only connects the individual with others, are refuges from what man most dreads: isolation.

The compelling need to avoid moral isolation has been described most forcefully by Balzac in this passage from *The Inventor's Suffering:*

> "But learn one thing, impress it upon your mind which is still so malleable: man has a horror for aloneness. And of all kinds of aloneness, moral aloneness is the most terrible. The first hermits lived with God, they inhabited the world which is most populated, the world of the spirits. The first thought of man, be he a leper or a prisoner, a sinner or an invalid, is: to have a companion of his fate. In order to satisfy this drive which is life itself, he applies all his strength, all his power, the energy of his whole life. Would Satan have found companions without this overpowering craving? On this theme one could write a whole epic, which would be the prologue to *Paradise Lost* because *Paradise Lost* is nothing but the apology of rebellion."

Any attempt to answer the question why the fear of isolation is so powerful in man would lead us far away from the main road we are following in this book. However, in order not to give the reader the impression that the need to feel one with others has some mysterious quality, I should like to indicate in what direction I think the answer lies.

One important element is the fact that men cannot live without some sort of co-operation with others. In any conceivable kind of culture man needs to co-operate with others if he wants to survive, whether for the purpose of defending himself against enemies or dangers of nature, or in order that he may be able to work and produce. Even Robinson Crusoe was accompanied by his man Friday; without him he would probably not only have become insane but would actually have died. Each person experiences this need for the help of others very drastically as a child. On account of the factual inability of the human child to take care of itself with regard to all-important functions, communication with others is a matter of life and death for the child. The possibility of being left alone is necessarily the most serious threat to the child's whole existence.

There is another element, however, which makes the need to "belong" so compelling: the fact of subjective self-consciousness, of the faculty of thinking by which man is aware of himself as an individual entity, different from nature and other people. Although the degree of this awareness varies, as will be pointed out in the next chapter, its existence confronts man with a problem which is essentially human: by being aware of himself as distinct from nature and other people, by being aware—even very dimly—of death,

sickness, aging, he necessarily feels his insignificance and smallness in comparison with the universe and all others who are not "he." Unless he belonged somewhere, unless his life had some meaning and direction, he would feel like a particle of dust and be overcome by his individual insignificance. He would not be able to relate himself to any system which would give meaning and direction to his life, he would be filled with doubt, and this doubt eventually would paralyze his ability to act—that is, to live.

Before we proceed, it may be helpful to sum up what has been pointed out with regard to our general approach to the problems of social psychology. Human nature is neither a biologically fixed and innate sum total of drives nor is it a lifeless shadow of cultural patterns to which it adapts itself smoothly; it is the product of human evolution, but it also has certain inherent mechanisms and laws. There are certain factors in man's nature which are fixed and unchangeable: the necessity to satisfy the physiologically conditioned drives and the necessity to avoid isolation and moral aloneness. We have seen that the individual has to accept the mode of life rooted in the system of production and distribution peculiar for any given society. In the process of dynamic adaptation to culture, a number of powerful drives develop which motivate the actions and feelings of the individual. The individual may or may not be conscious of these drives, but in any case they are forceful and demand satisfaction once they have developed. They become powerful forces which in their turn become effective in molding the social process. How economic, psychological, and ideological factors interact and what further general conclusion concerning this interaction one can make will be discussed later in the course of our analysis of the Reformation and of Fascism.[8] This discussion will always be centered around the main theme of this book: that man, the more he gains freedom in the sense of emerging from the original oneness with man and nature and the more he becomes an "individual," has no choice but to unite himself with the world in the spontaneity of love and productive work or else to seek a kind of security by such ties with the world as destroy his freedom and the integrity of his individual self.[9]

II THE EMERGENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE AMBIGUITY OF FREEDOM

Before we come to our main topic—the question of what freedom means to modern man, and why and how he tries to escape from it—we must first discuss a concept which may seem to be somewhat removed from actuality. It is, however, a premise necessary for the understanding of the analysis of freedom in modern society. I mean the concept that freedom characterizes human existence as such, and furthermore that its meaning changes according to the degree of man's awareness and conception of himself as an independent and separate being.

The social history of man started with his emerging from a state of oneness with the natural world to an awareness of himself as an entity separate from surrounding nature and men. Yet this awareness remained very dim over long periods of history. The individual continued to be closely tied to the natural and social world from which he emerged; while being partly aware of himself as a separate entity, he felt also part of the world around him. The growing process of the emergence of the individual from his original ties, a process which we may call "individuation," seems to have reached its peak in modern history in the centuries between the Reformation and the present.

In the life history of an individual we find the same process. A child is born when it is no longer one with its mother and becomes a biological entity separate from her. Yet, while this biological separation is the beginning of individual human existence, the child remains functionally one with its mother for a considerable period.

To the degree to which the individual, figuratively speaking, has not yet completely severed the umbilical cord which fastens him to the outside world, he lacks freedom; but these ties give him security and a feeling of

belonging and of being rooted somewhere. I wish to call these ties that exist before the process of individuation has resulted in the complete emergence of an individual "primary ties." They are organic in the sense that they are a part of normal human development; they imply a lack of individuality, but they also give security and orientation to the individual. They are the ties that connect the child with its mother, the member of a primitive community with his clan and nature, or the medieval man with the Church and his social caste. Once the stage of complete individuation is reached and the individual is free from these primary ties, he is confronted with a new task: to orient and root himself in the world and to find security in other ways than those which were characteristic of his pre-individualistic existence. Freedom then has a different meaning from the one it had before this stage of evolution is reached. It is necessary to stop here and to clarify these concepts by discussing them more concretely in connection with individual and social development.

The comparatively sudden change from fetal into human existence and the cutting off of the umbilical cord mark the independence of the infant from the mother's body. But this independence is only real in the crude sense of the separation of the two bodies. In a functional sense, the infant remains part of the mother. It is fed, carried, and taken care of in every vital respect by the mother. Slowly the child comes to regard the mother and other objects as entities apart from itself. One factor in this process is the neurological and the general physical development of the child, its ability to grasp objects—physically and mentally—and to master them. Through its own activity it experiences a world outside of itself. The process of individuation is furthered by that of education. This process entails a number of frustrations and prohibitions, which change the role of the mother into that of a person with different aims which conflict with the child's wishes, and often into that of a hostile and dangerous person.[10] This antagonism, which is one part of the educational process though by no means the whole, is an important factor in sharpening the distinction between the "I" and the "thou."

A few months elapse after birth before the child even recognizes another person as such and is able to react with a smile, and it is years before the child ceases to confuse itself with the universe.[11] Until then it shows the particular kind of egocentricity typical of children, an egocentricity which does not exclude tenderness for and interest in others,

since “others” are not yet definitely experienced as really separate from itself. For the same reason the child’s leaning on authority in these first years has also a different meaning from the leaning on authority later on. The parents, or whoever the authority may be, are not yet regarded as being a fundamentally separate entity; they are part of the child’s universe, and this universe is still part of the child; submission to them, therefore, has a different quality from the kind of submission that exists once two individuals have become really separate.

A remarkably keen description of a ten-year-old child’s sudden awareness of its own individuality is given by R. Hughes in *A High Wind in Jamaica*:

> “And then an event did occur, to Emily, of considerable importance. She suddenly realized who she was. There is little reason that one can see why it should not have happened to her five years earlier, or even five years later; and none, why it should have come that particular afternoon. She had been playing house in a nook right in the bows, behind the windlass (on which she had hung a devil’s-claw as a door knocker); and tiring of it was walking rather aimlessly aft, thinking vaguely about some bees and a fairy queen, when it suddenly flashed into her mind that she was *she.* She stopped dead, and began looking over all of her person which came within the range of her eyes. She could not see much, except a fore-shortened view of the front of her frock, and her hands when she lifted them for inspection; but it was enough for her to form a rough idea of the little body she suddenly realized to be hers.
>
> “She began to laugh, rather mockingly. ‘Well!’ she thought, in effect: ‘Fancy *you*, of all people, going and getting caught like this!—You can’t get out of it now, not for a very long time: you’ll have to go through with being a child, and growing up, and getting old, before you’ll be quit of this mad prank!’
>
> “Determined to avoid any interruption of this highly important occasion, she began to climb the ratlines, on her way to her favorite perch at the masthead. Each time she moved an arm or a leg in this simple action, however, it struck her with fresh amazement to find them obeying her so readily Memory told her, of course, that they had always done so before: but before, she had never realized how surprising this was. Once settled on her perch, she began examining the skin of her hands with the utmost care: for it was *hers.* She slipped a shoulder out of the top of her frock; and having peeped in to make sure she really was continuous under her clothes, she shrugged it up to touch her cheek. The contact of her face and the warm bare hollow of her shoulder gave her a comfortable thrill, as if it was the caress of some kind friend.

> But whether her feeling came to her through her cheek or her shoulder, which was the caresser and which the caressed, that no analysis could tell her.
>
> "Once fully convinced of this astonishing fact, that she was now Emily Bas-Thornton (why she inserted the 'now' she did not know, for she certainly imagined no transmigrational nonsense of having been anyone else before), she began seriously to reckon its implications."

The more the child grows and to the extent to which primary ties are cut off, the more it develops a quest for freedom and independence. But the fate of this quest can only be fully understood if we realize the dialectic quality in this process of growing individuation.

This process has two aspects: one is that the child grows stronger physically, emotionally, and mentally. In each of these spheres intensity and activity grow. At the same time, these spheres become more and more integrated. An organized structure guided by the individual's will and reason develops. If we call this organized and integrated whole of the personality the self, we can also say that the *one side of the growing process of individuation is the growth of self-strength*. The limits of the growth of individuation and the self are set, partly by individual conditions, but essentially by social conditions. For although the differences between individuals in this respect appear to be great, every society is characterized by a certain level of individuation beyond which the normal individual cannot go.

The other aspect of the process of individuation is growing aloneness. The primary ties offer security and basic unity with the world outside of oneself. To the extent to which the child emerges from that world it becomes aware of being alone, of being an entity separate from all others. This separation from a world, which in comparison with one's own individual existence is overwhelmingly strong and powerful, and often threatening and dangerous, creates a feeling of powerlessness and anxiety. As long as one was an integral part of that world, unaware of the possibilities and responsibilities of individual action, one did not need to be afraid of it. When one has become an individual, one stands alone and faces the world in all its perilous and overpowering aspects.

Impulses arise to give up one's individuality, to overcome the feeling of aloneness and powerlessness by completely submerging oneself in the world outside. These impulses, however, and the new ties arising from

them, are not identical with the primary ties which have been cut off in the process of growth itself. Just as a child can never return to the mother's womb physically, so it can never reverse, psychically, the process of individuation. Attempts to do so necessarily assume the character of submission, in which the basic contradiction between the authority and the child who submits to it is never eliminated. Consciously the child may feel secure and satisfied, but unconsciously it realizes that the price it pays is giving up strength and the integrity of its self. Thus the result of submission is the very opposite of what it was to be: submission increases the child's insecurity and at the same time creates hostility and rebelliousness, which is the more frightening since it is directed against the very persons on whom the child has remained—or become—dependent.

However, submission is not the only way of avoiding aloneness and anxiety. The other way, the only one which is productive and does not end in an insoluble conflict, is that of spontaneous relationship to man and nature, a relationship that connects the individual with the world without eliminating his individuality. This kind of relationship—the foremost expressions of which are love and productive work—are rooted in the integration and strength of the total personality and are therefore subject to the very limits that exist for the growth of the self.

The problem of submission and of spontaneous activity as two possible results of growing individuation will be discussed later on in great detail; here I only wish to point to the general principle, the dialectic process which results from growing individuation and from growing freedom of the individual. The child becomes more free to develop and express its own individual self unhampered by those ties which were limiting it. But the child also becomes more free *from* a world which gave it security and reassurance. The process of individuation is one of growing strength and integration of its individual personality, but it is at the same time a process in which the original identity with others is lost and in which the child becomes more separate from them. This growing separation may result in an isolation that has the quality of desolation and creates intense anxiety and insecurity; it may result in a new kind of closeness and a solidarity with others if the child has been able to develop the inner strength and productivity which are the premise of this new kind of relatedness to the world.

If every step in the direction of separation and individuation were matched by corresponding growth of the self, the development of the child would be harmonious. This does not occur, however. While the process of individuation takes place automatically, the growth of the self is hampered for a number of individual and social reasons. The lag between these two trends results in an unbearable feeling of isolation and powerlessness, and this in its turn leads to psychic mechanisms, which later on are described as *mechanisms of escape.*

Phylogenetically, too, the history of man can be characterized as a process of growing individuation and growing freedom. Man emerges from the prehuman stage by the first steps in the direction of becoming free from coercive instincts. If we understand by instinct a specific action pattern which is determined by inherited neurological structures, a clear-cut trend can be observed in the animal kingdom.[12] The lower an animal is in the scale of development, the more are its adaptation to nature and all its activities controlled by instinctive and reflex action mechanisms. The famous social organizations of some insects are created entirely by instincts. On the other hand, the higher an animal is in the scale of development, the more flexibility of action pattern and the less completeness of structural adjustment do we find at birth. This development reaches its peak with man. He is the most helpless of all animals at birth. His adaptation to nature is based essentially on the process of learning, not on instinctual determination. "Instinct… is a diminishing if not a disappearing category in higher animal forms, especially in the human."[13]

Human existence begins when the lack of fixation of action by instincts exceeds a certain point; when the adaptation to nature loses its coercive character; when the way to act is no longer fixed by hereditarily given mechanisms. In other words, *human existence and freedom are from the beginning inseparable.* Freedom is here used not in its positive sense of "freedom to" but in its negative sense of "freedom from," namely freedom from instinctual determination of his actions.

Freedom in the sense just discussed is an ambiguous gift. Man is born without the equipment for appropriate action which the animal possesses;[14] he is dependent on his parents for a longer time than any animal, and his reactions to his surroundings are less quick and less effective than the automatically regulated instinctive actions are. He goes through all the dangers and fears which this lack of instinctive equipment implies. Yet this

very helplessness of man is the basis from which human development springs; *man's biological weakness is the condition of human culture.*

From the beginning of his existence man is confronted with the choice between different courses of action. In the animal there is an uninterrupted chain of reactions starting with a stimulus, like hunger, and ending with a more or less strictly determined course of action, which does away with the tension created by the stimulus. In man that chain is interrupted. The stimulus is there but the kind of satisfaction is "open," that is, he must choose between different courses of action. Instead of a predetermined instinctive action, man has to weigh possible courses of action in his mind; he starts to think. He changes his role toward nature from that of purely passive adaptation to an active one: he produces. He invents tools and, while thus mastering nature, he separates himself from it more and more. He becomes dimly aware of himself—or rather of his group—as not being identical with nature. It dawns upon him that his is a tragic fate: to be part of nature, and yet to transcend it. He becomes aware of death as his ultimate fate even if he tries to deny it in manifold phantasies.

One particularly telling representation of the fundamental relation between man and freedom is offered in the biblical myth of man's expulsion from paradise.

The myth identifies the beginning of human history with an act of choice, but it puts all emphasis on the sinfulness of this first act of freedom and the suffering resulting from it. Man and woman live in the Garden of Eden in complete harmony with each other and with nature. There is peace and no necessity to work; there is no choice, no freedom, no thinking either. Man is forbidden to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He acts against God's command, he breaks through the state of harmony with nature of which he is a part without transcending it. From the standpoint of the Church which represented authority, this is essentially sin. From the standpoint of man, however, this is the beginning of human freedom. Acting against God's orders means freeing himself from coercion, emerging from the unconscious existence of prehuman life to the level of man. Acting against the command of authority, committing a sin is in its positive human aspect the first act of freedom, that is, the first *human* act. In the myth the sin in its formal aspect is the eating of the tree of knowledge. The act of disobedience as an act of freedom is the beginning of reason. The myth speaks of other consequences of the first act of freedom. The original

harmony between man and nature is broken. God proclaims war between man and woman, and war between nature and man. Man has become separate from nature, he has taken the first step toward becoming human by becoming an "individual." He has committed the first act of freedom. The myth emphasizes the suffering resulting from this act. To transcend nature, to be alienated from nature and from another human being, finds man naked, ashamed. He is alone and free, yet powerless and afraid. The newly won freedom appears as a curse; he is free from the sweet bondage of paradise, but he is not free to govern himself, to realize his individuality.

"Freedom from" is not identical with positive freedom, with "freedom to." The emergence of man from nature is a long-drawn-out process; to a large extent he remains tied to the world from which he emerged; he remains part of nature—the soil he lives on, the sun and moon and stars, the trees and flowers, the animals, and the group of people with whom he is connected by the ties of blood. Primitive religions bear testimony to man's feeling of oneness with nature. Animate and inanimate nature are part of his human world or, as one may also put it, he is still part of the natural world.

The primary ties block his full human development; they stand in the way of the development of his reason and his critical capacities; they let him recognize himself and others only through the medium of his, or their, participation in a clan, a social or religious community, and not as human beings; in other words, they block his development as a free, self determining, productive individual. But although this is one aspect, there is another one. This identity with nature, clan, religion, gives the individual security. He belongs to, he is rooted in, a structuralized whole in which he has an unquestionable place. He may suffer from hunger or suppression, but he does not suffer from the worst of all pains—complete aloneness and doubt.

We see that the process of growing human freedom has the same dialectic character that we have noticed in the process of individual growth. On the one hand it is a process of growing strength and integration, mastery of nature, growing power of human reason, and growing solidarity with other human beings. But on the other hand this growing individuation means growing isolation, insecurity, and thereby growing doubt concerning one's own role in the universe, the meaning of one's life, and with all that a growing feeling of one's own powerlessness and insignificance as an individual.

If the process of the development of mankind had been harmonious, if it had followed a certain plan, then both sides of the development—the growing strength and the growing individuation—would have been exactly balanced. As it is, the history of mankind is one of conflict and strife. Each step in the direction of growing individuation threatened people with new insecurities. Primary bonds once severed cannot be mended; once paradise is lost, man cannot return to it. There is only one possible, productive solution for the relationship of individualized man with the world: his active solidarity with all men and his spontaneous activity, love and work, which unite him again with the world, not by primary ties but as a free and independent individual.

However, if the economic, social and political conditions on which the whole process of human individuation depends, do not offer a basis for the realization of individuality in the sense just mentioned, while at the same time people have lost those ties which gave them security, this lag makes freedom an unbearable burden. It then becomes identical with doubt, with a kind of life which lacks meaning and direction. Powerful tendencies arise to escape from this kind of freedom into submission or some kind of relationship to man and the world which promises relief from uncertainty, even if it deprives the individual of his freedom.

European and American history since the end of the Middle Ages is the history of the full emergence of the individual. It is a process which started in Italy, in the Renaissance, and which only now seems to have come to a climax. It took over four hundred years to break down the medieval world and to free people from the most apparent restraints. But while in many respects the individual has grown, has developed mentally and emotionally, and participates in cultural achievements in a degree unheard-of before, the lag between “freedom from” and “freedom to” has grown too. The result of this disproportion between freedom *from* any tie and the lack of possibilities for the positive realization of freedom and individuality has led, in Europe, to a panicky flight from freedom into new ties or at least into complete indifference.

We shall start our study of the meaning of freedom for modern man with an analysis of the cultural scene in Europe during the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era. In this period the economic basis of Western society underwent radical changes which were accompanied by an equally radical change in the personality structure of man. A new concept

of freedom developed then, which found its most significant ideological expression in new religious doctrines, those of the Reformation. Any understanding of freedom in modern society must start with that period in which the foundations of modern culture were laid, for this formative stage of modern man permits us, more clearly than any later epoch, to recognize the ambiguous meaning of freedom which was to operate throughout modern culture: on the one hand the growing independence of man from external authorities, on the other hand his growing isolation and the resulting feeling of individual insignificance and powerlessness. Our understanding of the new elements in the personality structure of man is enhanced by the study of their origins, because by analyzing the essential features of capitalism and individualism at their very roots one is able to contrast them with an economic system and a type of personality which was fundamentally different from ours. This very contrast gives a better perspective for the understanding of the peculiarities of the modern social system, of how it has shaped the character structure of people who live in it, and of the new spirit which resulted from this change in personality.

The following chapter will also show that the period of the Reformation is more similar to the contemporary scene than might appear at first glance; as a matter of fact, in spite of all the obvious differences between the two periods, there is probably no period since the sixteenth century which resembles ours as closely in regard to the ambiguous meaning of freedom. The Reformation is one root of the idea of human freedom and autonomy as it is represented in modern democracy. However, while this aspect is always stressed, especially in non-Catholic countries, its other aspect—its emphasis on the wickedness of human nature, the insignificance and powerlessness of the individual, and the necessity for the individual to subordinate himself to a power outside of himself—is neglected. This idea of the unworthiness of the individual, his fundamental inability to rely on himself and his need to submit, is also the main theme of Hitler’s ideology, which, however, lacks the emphasis on freedom and moral principles which was inherent in Protestantism.

This ideological similarity is not the only one that makes the study of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a particularly fruitful starting point for the understanding of the present scene. There is also a fundamental likeness in the social situation. I shall try to show how this likeness is responsible for the ideological and psychological similarity. Then as now a vast sector of

the population was threatened in its traditional way of life by revolutionary changes in the economic and social organization; especially was the middle class, as today, threatened by the power of monopolies and the superior strength of capital, and this threat had an important effect on the spirit and the ideology of the threatened sector of society by enhancing the individual’s feeling of aloneness and insignificance.

III FREEDOM IN THE AGE OF THE REFORMATION

1. Medieval Background and the Renaissance

The picture of the Middle Ages[15] has been distorted in two ways. Modern rationalism has looked upon the Middle Ages as an essentially dark period. It has pointed to the general lack of personal freedom, to the exploitation of the mass of the population by a small minority, to its narrowness which makes the peasant of the surrounding country a dangerous and suspected stranger to the city dweller—not to speak of a person of another country—and to its superstitiousness and ignorance. On the other hand, the Middle Ages have been idealized, for the most part by reactionary philosophers but sometimes by progressive critics of modern capitalism. They have pointed to the sense of solidarity, the subordination of economic to human needs, the directness and concreteness of human relations, the supranational principle of the Catholic Church, the sense of security which was characteristic of man in the Middle Ages. Both pictures are right; what makes them both wrong is to draw one of them and shut one's eyes to the other.

What characterizes medieval in contrast to modern society is its lack of individual freedom. Everybody in the earlier period was chained to his role in the social order. A man had little chance to move socially from one class to another, he was hardly able to move even geographically from one town or from one country to another. With few exceptions he had to stay where he was born. He was often not even free to dress as he pleased or to eat what he liked. The artisan had to sell at a certain price and the peasant at a certain place, the market of the town. A guild member was forbidden to divulge any technical secrets of production to anybody who was not a member of his guild and was compelled to let his fellow guild members share in any advantageous buying of raw material. Personal, economic, and

social life was dominated by rules and obligations from which practically no sphere of activity was exempted.

But although a person was not free in the modern sense, neither was he alone and isolated. In having a distinct, unchangeable, and unquestionable place in the social world from the moment of birth, man was rooted in a structuralized whole, and thus life had a meaning which left no place, and no need, for doubt. A person was identical with his role in society; he was a peasant, an artisan, a knight, and not *an individual* who *happened* to have this or that occupation. The social order was conceived as a natural order, and being a definite part of it gave a feeling of security and of belonging. There was comparatively little competition. One was born into a certain economic position which guaranteed a livelihood determined by tradition, just as it carried economic obligations to those higher in the social hierarchy. But within the limits of his social sphere the individual actually had much freedom to express his self in his work and in his emotional life. Although there was no individualism in the modern sense of the unrestricted choice between many possible ways of life (a freedom of choice which is largely abstract), there was a great deal of *concrete individualism in real life.*

There was much suffering and pain, but there was also the Church which made this suffering more tolerable by explaining it as a result of the sin of Adam and the individual sins of each person. While the Church fostered a sense of guilt, it also assured the individual of her unconditional love to all her children and offered a way to acquire the conviction of being forgiven and loved by God. The relationship to God was more one of confidence and love than of doubt and fear. Just as a peasant and a town dweller rarely went beyond the limits of the small geographical area which was theirs, so the universe was limited and simple to understand. The earth and man were its center, heaven or hell was the future place of life, and all actions from birth to death were transparent in their causal interrelation.

Although society was thus structuralized and gave man security, yet it kept him in bondage. It was a different kind of bondage from that which authoritarianism and oppression in later centuries constituted. Medieval society did not deprive the individual of his freedom, because the “individual” did not yet exist; man was still related to the world by primary ties. He did not yet conceive of himself as an individual except through the medium of his social (which then was also his natural) role. He did not

conceive of any other persons as “individuals” either. The peasant who came into town was a stranger, and even within the town members of different social groups regarded each other as strangers. Awareness of one’s individual self, of others, and of the world as separate entities, had not yet fully developed.

The lack of self-awareness of the individual in medieval society has found classical expression in Jacob Burckhardt’s description of medieval culture:

> “In the Middle Ages both sides of human consciousness—that which was turned within as that which was turned without—lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family, or corporation—only through some general category.”[16]

The structure of society and the personality of man changed in the late Middle Ages. The unity and centralization of medieval society became weaker. Capital, individual economic initiative and competition grew in importance; a new moneyed class developed. A growing individualism was noticeable in all social classes and affected all spheres of human activity, taste, fashion, art, philosophy, and theology. I should like to emphasize here that this whole process had a different meaning for the small group of wealthy and prosperous capitalists on the one hand, and on the other hand for the masses of peasants and especially for the urban middle class for which this new development meant to some extent wealth and chances for individual initiative, but essentially a threat to its traditional way of life. It is important to bear this difference in mind from the outset because the psychological and ideological reactions of these various groups were determined by this very difference.

The new economic and cultural development took place in Italy more intensely and with more distinct repercussions on philosophy, art, and on the whole style of life than in Western and Central Europe. In Italy, for the first time, the individual emerged from feudal society and broke the ties which had been giving him security and narrowing him at one and the same time. The Italian of the Renaissance became, in Burckhardt’s words, “the first-born among the sons of Modern Europe,” the first individual.

There were a number of economic and political factors which were responsible for the breakdown of medieval society earlier in Italy than in Central and Western Europe. Among them were the geographical position of Italy and the commercial advantages resulting from it, in a period when the Mediterranean was the great trade route of Europe; the fight between Pope and emperor resulting in the existence of a great number of independent political units; the nearness to the Orient, as a consequence of which certain skills which were important for the development of industries, as for instance the silk industry, were brought to Italy long before they came to other parts of Europe.

Resulting from these and other conditions, was the rise in Italy of a powerful moneyed class the members of which were filled with a spirit of initiative, power, ambition. Feudal class stratifications became less important. From the twelfth century onwards nobles and burghers lived together within the walls of the cities. Social intercourse began to ignore distinctions of caste. Birth and origin were of less importance than wealth.

On the other hand, the traditional social stratification among the masses was shaken too. Instead of it, we find urban masses of exploited and politically suppressed workers. As early as 1231, as Burckhardt points out, Frederick II's political measures were "aimed at the complete destruction of the feudal state, at the transformation of the people into a multitude destitute of will and of the means of resistance, but profitable in the utmost degree to the exchequer." (*Op. cit.*, p. 5.)

The result of this progressive destruction of the medieval social structure was the emergence of the individual in the modern sense. To quote Burckhardt again: "In Italy this veil (of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession) first melted into air; an *objective* treatment and consideration of the state and of all the things of this world became possible. The *subjective* side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual *individual,* and recognized himself as such. In the same way the Greek had once distinguished himself from the barbarian, and the Arabian had felt himself an individual at a time when other Asiatics knew themselves only as members of a race." (*Op. cit.*, p. 129.) Burckhardt's description of the spirit of this new individual illustrates what we have said in the previous chapter on the emergence of the individual from primary ties. Man discovers himself and others as individuals, as separate entities; he discovers nature as something apart

from himself in two aspects: as an object of theoretical and practical mastery, and in its beauty, as an object of pleasure. He discovers the world, practically by discovering new continents and spiritually by developing a cosmopolitan spirit, a spirit in which Dante can say: “My country is the whole world.”[17]

The Renaissance was the culture of a wealthy and powerful upper class, on the crest of the wave which was whipped up by the storm of new economic forces. The masses who did not share the wealth and power of the ruling group had lost the security of their former status and had become a shapeless mass, to be flattered or to be threatened—but always to be manipulated and exploited by those in power. A new despotism arose side by side with the new individualism. Freedom and tyranny, individuality and disorder, were inextricably interwoven. The Renaissance was not a culture of small shopkeepers and petty bourgeois but of wealthy nobles and burghers. Their economic activity and their wealth gave them a feeling of freedom and a sense of individuality. But at the same time, these same people had lost something: the security and feeling of belonging which the medieval social structure had offered. They were more free, but they were also more alone. They used their power and wealth to squeeze the last ounce of pleasure out of life; but in doing so, they had to use ruthlessly every means, from physical torture to psychological manipulation, to rule over the masses and to check their competitors within their own class. All human relationships were poisoned by this fierce life-and-death struggle for the maintenance of power and wealth. Solidarity with one’s fellow men—or at least with the members of one’s own class—was replaced by a cynical detached attitude; other individuals were looked upon as “objects” to be used and manipulated, or they were ruthlessly destroyed if it suited one’s own ends. The individual was absorbed by a passionate egocentricity, an insatiable greed for power and wealth. As a result of all this, the successful individual’s relation to his own self, his sense of security and confidence were poisoned too. His own self became as much an object of manipulation to him as other persons had become. We have reasons to doubt whether the powerful masters of Renaissance capitalism were as happy and as secure as they are often pictured. It seems that the new freedom brought two things to them: an increased feeling of strength and at the same time an increased isolation, doubt, skepticism (cf. Huizinga, p. 159.), and—resulting from all these—anxiety. It is the same contradiction that we find in the philosophic

writings of the humanists. Side by side with their emphasis on human dignity, individuality, and strength, they exhibited insecurity and despair in their philosophy.[18]

This underlying insecurity resulting from the position of an isolated individual in a hostile world tends to explain the genesis of a character trait which was, as Burckhardt has pointed out (*op. cit.*, p. 139.), characteristic of the individual of the Renaissance and not present, at least in the same intensity, in the member of the medieval social structure: his passionate craving for fame. If the meaning of life has become doubtful, if one's relations to others and to oneself do not offer security, then fame is one means to silence one's doubts. It has a function to be compared with that of the Egyptian pyramids or the Christian faith in immortality: it elevates one's individual life from its limitations and instability to the plane of indestructibility; if one's name is known to one's contemporaries and if one can hope that it will last for centuries, then one's life has meaning and significance by this very reflection of it in the judgments of others. It is obvious that this solution of individual insecurity was only possible for a social group whose members possessed the actual means of gaining fame. It was not a solution which was possible for the powerless masses in that same culture nor one which we shall find in the urban middle class that was the backbone of the Reformation.

We started with the discussion of the Renaissance because this period is the beginning of modern individualism and also because the work done by historians of this period throws some light on the very factors which are significant for the main process which this study analyzes, namely the emergence of man from a pre-individualistic existence to one in which he has full awareness of himself as a separate entity. But in spite of the fact that the ideas of the Renaissance were not without influence on the further development of European thinking, the essential roots of modern capitalism, its economic structure and its spirit, are not to be found in the Italian culture of the late Middle Ages, but in the economic and social situation of Central and Western Europe and in the doctrines of Luther and Calvin.

The main difference between the two cultures is this: the Renaissance period represented a comparatively high development of commercial and industrial capitalism; it was a society in which a small group of wealthy and powerful individuals ruled and formed the social basis for the philosophers

and artists who expressed the spirit of this culture. The Reformation, on the other hand, was essentially a religion of the urban middle and lower classes, and of the peasants. Germany, too, had its wealthy businessmen, like the Fuggers, but they were not the ones to whom the new religious doctrines appealed, nor were they the main basis from which modern capitalism developed. As Max Weber has shown, it was the urban middle class which became the backbone of modern capitalistic development in the Western World.[19] According to the entirely different social background of both movements we must expect the spirit of the Renaissance and that of the Reformation to be different.[20] In discussing the theology of Luther and Calvin some of the differences will become clear by implication. Our attention will be focused on the question of how the liberation from individual bonds affected the character structure of the urban middle class; we shall try to show that Protestantism and Calvinism, while giving expression to a new feeling of freedom, at the same time constituted an escape from the burden of freedom.

We shall first discuss what the economic and social situation in Europe, especially in Central Europe, was in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and then analyze what repercussions this situation had on the personality of the people living in this period, what relation the teachings of Luther and Calvin had to these psychological factors, and what was the relation of these new religious doctrines to the spirit of capitalism.[21]

In *medieval society* the economic organization of the city had been relatively static. The craftsmen since the later part of the Middle Ages were united in their guilds. Each master had one or two apprentices and the number of masters was in some relation to the needs of the community. Although there were always some who had to struggle hard to earn enough to survive, by and large the guild member could be sure that he could live by his hand's work. If he made good chairs, shoes, bread, saddles, and so on, he did all that was necessary to be sure of living safely on the level which was traditionally assigned to his social position. He could rely on his "good works," if we use the term here not in its theological but in its simple economic meaning. The guilds blocked any strong competition among their members and enforced co-operation with regard to the buying of raw materials, the techniques of production, and the prices of their products. In contradiction to a tendency to idealize the guild system together with the whole of medieval life, some historians have pointed out that the guilds

were always tinged with a monopolistic spirit, which tried to protect a small group and to exclude newcomers. Most authors, however, agree that even if one avoids any idealization of the guilds they were based on mutual co-operation and offered relative security to their members.[22]

Medieval *commerce* was, in general, as Sombart has pointed out, carried on by a multitude of very small businessmen. Retail and wholesale business were not yet separated and even those traders who went into foreign countries, such as the members of the North German Hanse, were also concerned with retail selling. The accumulation of capital was also very slow up to the end of the fifteenth century. Thus the small businessman had a considerable amount of security compared with the economic situation in the late Middle Ages when large capital and monopolistic commerce assumed increasing importance. "Much that is now mechanical," says Professor Tawney about the life of a medieval city, "was then personal, intimate and direct and there was little room for an organization on a scale too vast for the standards that are applied to individuals, and for the doctrine that silences scruples and closes all accounts with the final plea of economic expediency." (Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 28.)

This leads us to a point which is essential for the understanding of the position of the individual in medieval society, the *ethical views* concerning *economic activities* as they were expressed not only in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, but also in secular laws. We follow Tawney's presentation on this point, since his position cannot be suspected of attempting to idealize or romanticize the medieval world. The basic assumptions concerning economic life were two: "*That economic interests are subordinate to the real business of life, which is salvation*, and that economic conduct is one aspect of personal conduct, upon which as on other parts of it, the rules of morality are binding."

Tawney then elaborates the medieval view on economic activities:

> "Material riches are necessary; they have secondary importance, since without them men cannot support themselves and help one another… But economic motives are suspect. Because they are powerful appetites, men fear them, but they are not mean enough to applaud them. … There is no place in medieval theory for economic activity which is not related to a moral end, and to found a science of society upon the assumption that the appetite for economic gain is a constant and measurable force, to be accepted like other natural forces, as an inevitable and self-evident datum, would have appeared to the medieval thinker as hardly less irrational and

> less immoral than to make the premise of social philosophy the unrestrained operation of such necessary human attributes as pugnacity and the sexual instinct. … Riches, as St. Antonio says, exist for man, not man for riches. … At every turn therefore, there are limits, restrictions, warnings against allowing economic interests to interfere with serious affairs. It is right for a man to seek such wealth as is necessary for a livelihood in his station. To seek more is not enterprise, but avarice, and avarice is a deadly sin. Trade is legitimate; the different resources of different countries show that it was intended by Providence. But it is a dangerous business. A man must be sure that he carries it on for the public benefit, and that the profits which he takes are no more than the wages of his labor. Private property is a necessary institution, at least in a fallen world; men work more and dispute less when goods are private than when they are common. But it is to be tolerated as a concession to human frailty, not applauded as desirable in itself; the ideal—if only man's nature could rise to it—is communism. 'Communis enim,' wrote Gratian in his decretum, 'usus omnium quae sunt in hoc mundo, omnibus hominibus esse debuit.' At best, indeed, the estate is somewhat encumbered. It must be legitimately acquired. It must be in the largest possible number of hands. It must provide for the support of the poor. Its use must as far as practicable be common. Its owners must be ready to share it with those who need, even if they are not in actual destitution." (*Op. cit.*, p. 31 ff.)

Although these views expressed norms and were not an exact picture of the reality of economic life, they did reflect to some extent the actual spirit of medieval society.

The relative stability of the position of craftsmen and merchants which was characteristic in the medieval city, was slowly undermined in the late Middle Ages until it completely collapsed in the sixteenth century. Already in the fourteenth century—or even earlier—an increasing differentiation within the guilds had started and it continued in spite of all efforts to stop it. Some guild members had more capital than others and employed five or six journeymen instead of one or two. Soon some guilds admitted only persons with a certain amount of capital. Others became powerful monopolies trying to take every advantage from their monopolistic position and to exploit the customer as much as they could. On the other hand, many guild members became impoverished and had to try to earn some money outside of their traditional occupation; often they became small traders on the side. Many of them had lost their economic independence and security while they desperately clung to the traditional ideal of economic independence.[23]

In connection with this development of the guild system, the situation of the journeymen degenerated from bad to worse. While in the industries

of Italy and Flanders a class of dissatisfied workers existed already in the thirteenth century or even earlier, the situation of the journeymen in the craft guilds was still a relatively secure one. Although it was not true that every journeyman could become a master, many of them did. But as the number of journeymen under one master increased, the more capital was needed to become a master and the more the guilds assumed a monopolistic and exclusive character, the less were the opportunities of journeymen. The deterioration of their economic and social position was shown by their growing dissatisfaction, the formation of organizations of their own, by strikes and even violent insurrections.

What has been said about the increasing capitalistic development of the craft guilds is even more apparent with regard to *commerce.* While medieval commerce had been mainly a petty intertown business, national and international commerce grew rapidly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although historians disagree as to just when the big commercial companies started to develop, they do agree that in the fifteenth century they became more and more powerful and developed into monopolies, which by their superior capital strength threatened the small businessman as well as the consumer. The reform of Emperor Sigismund in the fifteenth century tried to curb the power of the monopolies by means of legislation. But the position of the small dealer became more and more insecure; he "had just enough influence to make his complaint heard but not enough to compel effective action."[24]

The indignation and rage of the small merchant against the monopolies was given eloquent expression by Luther in his pamphlet "On Trading and Usury,"[25] printed in 1524. "They have all commodities under their control and practice without concealment all the tricks that have been mentioned; they raise and lower prices as they please and oppress and ruin all the small merchants, as the pike the little fish in the water, just as though they were lords over God's creatures and free from all the laws of faith and love." These words of Luther's could have been written today. The fear and rage which the middle class felt against the wealthy monopolists in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is in many ways similar to the feeling which characterizes the attitude of the middle class against monopolies and powerful capitalists in our era.

The role of capital was also growing in *industry.* One remarkable example is the mining industry. Originally the share of each member of a

mining guild was in proportion to the amount of work he did. But by the fifteenth century, in many instances, the shares belonged to capitalists who did not work themselves, and increasingly the work was done by workers who were paid wages and had no share in the enterprise. The same capitalistic development occurred in other industries too, and increased the trend which resulted from the growing role of capital in the craft guilds and in commerce: growing division between poor and rich and growing dissatisfaction among the poor classes.

As to the situation of the peasantry the opinions of historians differ. However, the following analysis of Schapiro seems to be sufficiently supported by the findings of most historians. "Notwithstanding these evidences of prosperity, the condition of the peasantry was rapidly deteriorating. At the beginning of the sixteenth century very few indeed were independent proprietors of the land they cultivated, with representation in the local diets, which in the Middle Ages was a sign of class independence and equality. The vast majority were *Hoerige*, a class personally free but whose land was subject to dues, the individuals being liable to services according to agreement. … It was the *Hoerige* who were the backbone of all the agrarian uprisings. This middle-class peasant, living in a semi-independent community near the estate of the lord, became aware that the increase of dues and services was transforming him into a state of practical serfdom, and the village common into a part of the lord's manor."[26]

Significant changes in the *psychological atmosphere* accompanied the economic development of capitalism. A spirit of restlessness began to pervade life toward the end of the Middle Ages. The concept of time in the modern sense began to develop. Minutes became valuable; a symptom of this new sense of time is the fact that in Nürnberg the clocks have been striking the quarter hours since the sixteenth century.[27] Too many holidays began to appear as a misfortune. Time was so valuable that one felt one should never spend it for any purpose which was not useful. Work became increasingly a supreme value. A new attitude toward work developed and was so strong that the middle class grew indignant against the economic unproductivity of the institutions of the Church. Begging orders were resented as unproductive, and hence immoral.

The idea of efficiency assumed the role of one of the highest moral virtues. At the same time, the desire for wealth and material success became

the all-absorbing passion. “All the world,” says the preacher Martin Butzer, “is running after those trades and occupations that will bring the most gain. The study of the arts and sciences is set aside for the basest kind of manual work. All the clever heads, which have been endowed by God with a capacity for the nobler studies, are engrossed by commerce, which nowadays is so saturated with dishonesty that it is the last sort of business an honorable man should engage in.”[28]

One outstanding consequence of the economic changes we have been describing affected everyone. The medieval social system was destroyed and with it the stability and relative security it had offered the individual. Now with the beginning of capitalism all classes of society started to move. There ceased to be a fixed place in the economic order which could be considered a natural, an unquestionable one. *The individual was left alone; everything depended on his own effort, not on the security of his traditional status.*

Each class, however, was affected in a different way by this development. For the poor of the cities, the workers and apprentices, it meant growing exploitation and impoverishment; for the peasants also it meant increased economic and personal pressure; the lower nobility faced ruin, although in a different way. While for these classes the new development was essentially a change for the worse, the situation was much more complicated for the urban middle class. We have spoken of the growing differentiation which took place within its ranks. Large sections of it were put into an increasingly bad position. Many artisans and small traders had to face the superior power of monopolists and other competitors with more capital, and they had greater and greater difficulties in remaining independent. They were often fighting against overwhelmingly strong forces and for many it was a desperate and hopeless fight. Other parts of the middle class were more prosperous and participated in the general upward trend of rising capitalism. But even for these more fortunate ones the increasing role of *capital,* of the *market,* and of *competition,* changed their personal situation into one of insecurity, isolation, and anxiety.

The fact that capital assumed decisive importance meant that a suprapersonal force was determining their economic and thereby their personal fate. Capital “had ceased to be a servant and had become a master. Assuming a separate and independent vitality it claimed the right of a

predominant partner to dictate economic organization in accordance with its own exacting requirements." (Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 86.)

The new function of the market had a similar effect. The medieval market had been a relatively small one, the functioning of which was readily understood. It brought demand and supply into direct and concrete relation. A producer knew approximately how much to produce and could be relatively sure of selling his products for a proper price. Now it was necessary to produce for an increasingly large market, and one could not determine the possibilities of sale in advance. It was therefore not enough to produce useful goods. Although this was one condition for selling them, the unpredictable laws of the market decided whether the products could be sold at all and at what profit. The mechanism of the new market seemed to resemble the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, which taught that the individual must make every effort to be good, but that even before his birth it had been decided whether or not he is to be saved. The market day became the day of judgment for the products of human effort.

Another important factor in this context was the growing role of competition. While competition was certainly not completely lacking in medieval society, the feudal economic system was based on the principle of co-operation and was regulated—or regimented—by rules which curbed competition. With the rise of capitalism these medieval principles gave way more and more to a principle of individualistic enterprise. Each individual must go ahead and try his luck. He had to swim or to sink. Others were not allied with him in a common enterprise, they became competitors, and often he was confronted with the choice of destroying them or being destroyed.[29]

Certainly the role of capital, the market, and individual competition, was not as important in the sixteenth century as it was to become later on. At the same time, all the decisive elements of modern capitalism had already by that time come into existence, together with their psychological effect upon the individual.

While we have just described one side of the picture, there is also another one: capitalism freed the individual. It freed man from the regimentation of the corporative system; it allowed him to stand on his own feet and to try his luck. He became the master of his fate, his was the risk, his the gain. Individual effort could lead him to success and economic independence. Money became the great equalizer of man and proved to be more powerful than birth and caste.

This side of capitalism was only beginning to develop in the early period which we have been discussing. It played a greater role with the small group of wealthy capitalists than with the urban middle class. However, even to the extent to which it was effective then, it had an important effect in shaping the personality of man.

If we try now to sum up our discussion of the impact of the social and economic changes on the individual in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries we arrive at the following picture:

We find the same ambiguity of freedom which we have discussed before. The individual is freed *from* the bondage of economic and political ties. He also gains in positive freedom by the active and independent role which he has to play in the new system. But simultaneously he is freed from those ties which used to give him security and a feeling of belonging. Life has ceased to be lived in a closed world the center of which was man; the world has become limitless and at the same time threatening. By losing his fixed place in a closed world man loses the answer to the meaning of his life; the result is that doubt has befallen him concerning himself and the aim of life. He is threatened by powerful suprapersonal forces, capital and the market. His relationship to his fellow men, with everyone a potential competitor, has become hostile and estranged; he is free—that is, he is alone, isolated, threatened from all sides. Not having the wealth or the power which the Renaissance capitalist had, and also having lost the sense of unity with men and the universe, he is overwhelmed with a sense of his individual nothingness and helplessness. Paradise is lost for good, the individual stands alone and faces the world—a stranger thrown into a limitless and threatening world. The new freedom is bound to create a deep feeling of insecurity, powerlessness, doubt, aloneness, and anxiety. These feelings must be alleviated if the individual is to function successfully.

2. The Period of the Reformation

At this point of development, *Lutheranism* and *Calvinism* came into existence. The new religions were not the religions of a wealthy upper class but of the urban middle class, the poor in the cities, and the peasants. They carried an appeal to these groups because they gave expression to a new feeling of freedom and independence as well as to the feeling of powerlessness and anxiety by which their members were pervaded. But the

new religious doctrines did more than give articulate expression to the feelings engendered by a changing economic order. By their teachings they increased them and at the same time offered solutions which enabled the individual to cope with an otherwise unbearable insecurity.

Before we begin to analyze the social and psychological significance of the new religious doctrines, some remarks concerning the method of our approach may further the understanding of this analysis.

In studying the psychological significance of a religious or political doctrine, we must first bear in mind that the psychological analysis does not imply a judgment concerning the truth of the doctrine one analyzes. This latter question can be decided only in terms of the logical structure of the problem itself. The analysis of the psychological motivations behind certain doctrines or ideas can never be a substitute for a rational judgment of the validity of the doctrine and of the values which it implies, although such analysis may lead to a better understanding of the real meaning of a doctrine and thereby influence one's value judgment.

What the psychological analysis of doctrines can show is the subjective motivations which make a person aware of certain problems and make him seek for answers in certain directions. Any kind of thought, true or false, if it is more than a superficial conformance with conventional ideas, is motivated by the subjective needs and interests of the person who is thinking. It happens that some interests are furthered by finding the truth, others by destroying it. But in both cases the psychological motivations are important incentives for arriving at certain conclusions. We can go even further and say that ideas which are not rooted in powerful needs of the personality will have little influence on the actions and on the whole life of the person concerned.

If we analyze religious or political doctrines with regard to their psychological significance we must differentiate between two problems. We can study the character structure of the individual who creates a new doctrine and try to understand which traits in his personality are responsible for the particular direction of his thinking. Concretely speaking, this means, for instance, that we must analyze the character structure of Luther or Calvin to find out what trends in their personality made them arrive at certain conclusions and formulate certain doctrines. The other problem is to study the psychological motives, not of the creator of a doctrine, but of the social group to which this doctrine appeals. The influence of any doctrine or

idea depends on the extent to which it appeals to psychic needs in the character structure of those to whom it is addressed. Only if the idea answers powerful psychological needs of certain social groups will it become a potent force in history.

Both problems, the psychology of the leader and that of his followers, are, of course, closely linked with each other. If the same ideas appeal to them their character structure must be similar in important aspects. Aside from factors such as the special talent for thinking and action on the part of the leader, his character structure will usually exhibit in a more extreme and clear-cut way the particular personality structure of those to whom his doctrines appeal; he can arrive at a clearer and more outspoken formulation of certain ideas for which his followers are already prepared psychologically. The fact that the character structure of the leader shows more sharply certain traits to be found in his followers, can be due to one of two factors or to a combination of both: first, that his social position is typical for those conditions which mold the personality of the whole group; second, that by the accidental circumstances of his upbringing and his individual experiences these same traits are developed to a marked degree which for the group result from its social position.

In our analysis of the psychological significance of the doctrines of Protestantism and Calvinism we are not discussing Luther's and Calvin's personalities but the psychological situation of the social classes to which their ideas appealed. I want only to mention very briefly before starting with the discussion of Luther's theology, that Luther as a person was a typical representative of the "authoritarian character" as it will be described later on. Having been brought up by an unusually severe father and having experienced little love or security as a child, his personality was torn by a constant ambivalence toward authority; he hated it and rebelled against it, while at the same time he admired it and tended to submit to it. During his whole life there was always one authority against which he was opposed and another which he admired—his father and his superiors in the monastery in his youth; the Pope and the princes later on. He was filled with an extreme feeling of aloneness, powerlessness, wickedness, but at the same time with a passion to dominate. He was tortured by doubts as only a compulsive character can be, and was constantly seeking for something which would give him inner security and relieve him from this torture of uncertainty. He hated others, especially the "rabble," he hated himself, he

hated life; and out of all this hatred came a passionate and desperate striving to be loved. His whole being was pervaded by fear, doubt, and inner isolation, and on this personal basis he was to become the champion of social groups which were in a very similar position psychologically.

One more remark concerning the method of the following analysis seems to be warranted. Any psychological analysis of an individual's thoughts or of an ideology aims at the understanding of the psychological roots from which these thoughts or ideas spring. The first condition for such an analysis is to understand fully the logical context of an idea, and what its author consciously wants to say However, we know that a person, even if he is subjectively sincere, may frequently be driven unconsciously by a motive that is different from the one he believes himself to be driven by; that he may use one concept which logically implies a certain meaning and which to him, unconsciously, means something different from this "official" meaning. Furthermore, we know that he may attempt to harmonize certain contradictions in his own feeling by an ideological construction or to cover up an idea which he represses by a rationalization that expresses it's very opposite. The understanding of the operation of unconscious elements has taught us to be skeptical towards words and not to take them at face value.

The analysis of ideas has mainly to do with two tasks: one is to determine the weight that a certain idea has in the whole of an ideological system; the second is to determine whether we deal with a rationalization that differs from the real meaning of the thoughts. An example of the first point is the following: In Hitler's ideology, the emphasis on the injustice of the Versailles treaty plays a tremendous role, and it is true that he was genuinely indignant at the peace treaty. However, if we analyze his whole political ideology we see that its foundations are an intense wish for power and conquest, and although he consciously gives much weight to the injustice done to Germany, actually this thought has little weight in the whole of his thinking. An example of the difference between the consciously intended meaning of a thought and its real psychological meaning can be taken from the analysis of Luther's doctrines with which we are dealing in this chapter.

We say that his relation to God is one of submission on the basis of man's powerlessness. He himself speaks of this submission as a voluntary one, resulting not from fear but from love. Logically then, one might argue, this is not submission. Psychologically, however, it follows from the whole

structure of Luther's thoughts that his kind of love or faith actually is submission; that although he consciously thinks in terms of the voluntary and loving character of his "submission" to God, he is pervaded by a feeling of powerlessness and wickedness that makes the nature of his relationship to God one of submission. (Exactly as masochistic dependence of one person on another consciously is frequently conceived as "love.") From the viewpoint of a psychological analysis, therefore, the objection that Luther says something different from what we believe he means (although unconsciously) has little weight. We believe that certain contradictions in his system can be understood only by the analysis of the psychological meaning of his concepts.

In the following analysis of the doctrines of Protestantism I have interpreted the religious doctrines according to what they mean from the context of the whole system. I do not quote sentences that contradict some of Luther's or Calvin's doctrines if I have convinced myself that their weight and meaning is such as not to form real contradictions. But the interpretation I give is not founded on a method of picking out particular sentences that fit into my interpretation, but on a study of the whole of Luther's and Calvin's system, of its psychological basis, and following that of an interpretation of its single elements in the light of the psychological structure of the whole system.

If we want to understand what was new in the doctrines of the Reformation we have first to consider what was essential in the theology of the medieval Church.[30] In trying to do so, we are confronted with the same methodological difficulty which we have discussed in connection with such concepts as "medieval society" and "capitalistic society" just as in the economic sphere there is no sudden change from one structure to the other, so there is no such sudden change in the theological sphere either. Certain doctrines of Luther and Calvin are so similar to those of the medieval church that it is sometimes difficult to see any essential difference between them. Like Protestantism and Calvinism, the Catholic Church had always denied that man, on the strength of his own virtues and merits alone, could find salvation, that he could do without the grace of God as an indispensable means for salvation. However, in spite of all the elements common to the old and the new theology, the spirit of the Catholic Church had been essentially different from the spirit of the Reformation, especially

with regard to the problem of human dignity and freedom and the effect of man's actions upon his own fate.

Certain principles were characteristic of Catholic theology in the long period prior to the Reformation: the doctrine that man's nature, though corrupted by the sin of Adam, innately strives for the good; that man's will is free to desire the good; that man's own effort is of avail for his salvation; and that by the sacraments of the Church, based on the merits of Christ's death, the sinner can be saved.

However, some of the most representative theologians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, though holding the views just mentioned, at the same time taught doctrines which were of a profoundly different spirit. But although Aquinas teaches a doctrine of predestination, he never ceases to emphasize freedom of will as one of his fundamental doctrines. To bridge the contrast between the doctrine of freedom and that of predestination, he is obliged to use the most complicated constructions; but, although these constructions do not seem to solve the contradictions satisfactorily, he does not retreat from the doctrine of freedom of the will and of human effort, as being of avail for man's salvation, even though the will itself may need the support of God's grace.[31]

On the freedom of will Aquinas says that it would contradict the essence of God's and man's nature to assume that man was not free to decide and that man has even the freedom to refuse the grace offered to him by God.[32]

Other theologians emphasized more than Aquinas the role of man's effort for his salvation. According to Bonaventura, it is God's intention to offer grace to man, but only those receive it who prepare themselves for it by their merits.

This emphasis grew during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in the systems of Duns Scotus, Ockam, and Biel, a particularly important development for the understanding of the new spirit of the Reformation, since Luther's attacks were directed particularly against the Schoolmen of the late Middle Ages whom he called "Sau Theologen."

Duns Scotus stressed the role of will. The will is free. Through the realization of his will man realizes his individual self, and this self-realization is a supreme satisfaction to the individual. Since it is God's command that will is an act of the individual self, even God has no direct influence on man's decision.

Biel and Ockam stress the role of man's own merits as a condition for his salvation and although they too speak of God's help, its basic significance as it was assumed by the older doctrines was given up by them. (R. Seeberg, *op. cit.*, p. 766.) Biel assumes that man is free and can always turn to God, whose grace comes to his help. Ockam taught that man's nature has not been really corrupted by sin; to him, sin is only a single act which does not change the substance of man. The Tridentinum very clearly states that the free will co-operates with God's grace but that it can also refrain from this co-operation. (Cf. Bartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 468.) The picture of man, as it is presented by Ockam and other late Schoolmen, shows him not as the poor sinner but as a free being whose very nature makes him capable of everything good, and whose will is free from natural or any other external force.

The practice of buying a letter of indulgence, which played an increasing role in the late Middle Ages, and against which one of Luther's main attacks was directed, was related to this increasing emphasis on man's will and the avail of his efforts. By buying the letter of indulgence from the Pope's emissary, man was relieved from temporal punishment which was supposed to be a substitute for eternal punishment, and, as Seeberg has pointed out (*op. cit.*, p. 624), man had every reason to expect that he would be absolved from all sins.

At first glance it may seem that this practice of buying one's remission from the punishment of purgatory from the Pope contradicted the idea of the efficacy of man's efforts for his salvation, because it implies a dependence on the authority of the Church and its sacraments. But while this is true to a certain extent, it is also true that it contains a spirit of hope and security; if man could free himself from punishment so easily, then the burden of guilt was eased considerably. He could free himself from the weight of the past with relative ease and get rid of the anxiety which had haunted him. In addition to that one must not forget that according to the explicit or implicit theory of the Church, the effect of the letter of indulgence was dependent on the premise that its buyer had repented and confessed.[33]

Those ideas that sharply differ from the spirit of the Reformation are also to be found in the writings of the mystics, in the sermons and in the elaborate rules for the practice of confessors. In them we find a spirit of affirmation of man's dignity and of the legitimacy of the expression of his

whole self. Along with such an attitude we find the notion of the imitation of Christ, widespread as early as the twelfth century, and a belief that man could aspire to be like God. The rules for confessors showed a great understanding of the concrete situation of the individual and gave recognition to subjective individual differences. They did not treat sin as the weight by which the individual should be weighed down and humiliated, but as human frailty for which one should have understanding and respect.[34]

To sum up: the medieval Church stressed the dignity of man, the freedom of his will, and the fact that his efforts were of avail; it stressed the likeness between God and man and also man's right to be confident of God's love. Men were felt to be equal and brothers in their very likeness to God. In the late Middle Ages, in connection with the beginning of capitalism, bewilderment and insecurity arose; but at the same time tendencies that emphasized the role of will and human effort became increasingly stronger. We may assume that both the philosophy of the Renaissance and the Catholic doctrine of the late Middle Ages reflected the spirit prevailing in those social groups whose economic position gave them a feeling of power and independence. On the other hand, Luther's theology gave expression to the feelings of the middle class which, fighting against the authority of the Church and resenting the new moneyed class, felt threatened by rising capitalism and overcome by a feeling of powerlessness and individual insignificance.

Luther's system, in so far as it differed from the Catholic tradition, has two sides, one of which has been stressed more than the other in the picture of his doctrines which is usually given in Protestant countries. This aspect points out that he gave man independence in religious matters; that he deprived the Church of her authority and gave it to the individual; that his concept of faith and salvation is one of subjective individual experience, in which all responsibility is with the individual and none with an authority which could give him what he cannot obtain himself. There are good reasons to praise this side of Luther's and Calvin's doctrines, since they are one source of the development of political and spiritual freedom in modern society; a development which, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries, is inseparably connected with the ideas of Puritanism.

The other aspect of modern freedom is the isolation and powerlessness it has brought for the individual, and this aspect has its roots in

Protestantism as much as that of independence. Since this book is devoted mainly to freedom as a burden and danger, the following analysis, being intentionally one-sided, stresses that side in Luther's and Calvin's doctrines in which this negative aspect of freedom is rooted: their emphasis on the fundamental evilness and powerlessness of man.

Luther assumed the existence of an innate evilness in man's nature, which directs his will for evil and makes it impossible for any man to perform any good deed on the basis of his nature. Man has an evil and vicious nature *("naturaliter et inevitabiliter mala et vitiata natura").* The depravity of man's nature and its complete lack of freedom to choose the right is one of the fundamental concepts of Luther's whole thinking. In this spirit he begins his comments on Paul's letter to the Romans: "The essence of this letter is: to destroy, to uproot, and to annihilate all wisdom and justice of the flesh, may it appear—in our eyes and in those of others—ever so remarkable and sincere. … What matters is that our justice and wisdom which unfold before our eyes are being destroyed and uprooted from our heart and from our vain self."[35]

This conviction of man's rottenness and powerlessness to do anything good on his own merits is one essential condition of God's grace. Only if man humiliates himself and demolishes his individual will and pride will God's grace descend upon him. "For God wants to save us not by our own but by extraneous *(fremde)* justice and wisdom, by a justice that does not come from ourselves and does not originate in ourselves but comes to us from somewhere else … That is, a justice must be taught that comes exclusively from the outside and is entirely alien to ourselves." (*op. cit*., Chapter I, i.)

An even more radical expression of man's powerlessness was given by Luther seven years later in his pamphlet *"De servo arbitrio,"* which was an attack against Erasmus' defense of the freedom of the will. "… Thus the human will is, as it were, a beast between the two. If God sit thereon, it wills and goes where God will; as the Psalm saith, 'I was as a beast before thee, nevertheless I am continually with thee.' (Ps. 73:22, 23.) If Satan sit thereon, it wills and goes as Satan will. Nor is it in the power of its own will to choose, to which rider it will run, nor which it will seek; but the riders themselves contend, which shall have and hold it."[36] Luther declares that if one does not like "to leave out this theme (of free will) altogether (which would be most safe and also most religious) we may, nevertheless, with a

good conscience teach that it be used so far as to allow man a ‘free will,’ not in respect of those who are above him, but in respect only of those beings who are below him… God-ward man has no ‘free will,’ but is a captive, slave, and servant either to the will of God or to the will of Satan.”[37] The doctrines that man was a powerless tool in God’s hands and fundamentally evil, that his only task was to resign to the will of God, that God could save him as the result of an incomprehensible act of justice—these doctrines were not the definite answer a man was to give who was so much driven by despair, anxiety, and doubt and at the same time by such an ardent wish for certainty as Luther. He eventually found the answer for his doubts. In 1518 a sudden revelation came to him. Man cannot be saved on the basis of his virtues; he should not even meditate whether or not his works were well pleasing to God; but he can have certainty of his salvation if he has faith. Faith is given to man by God; once man has had the indubitable subjective experience of faith he can also be certain of his salvation. The individual is essentially receptive in this relationship to God. Once man receives God’s grace in the experience of faith his nature becomes changed, since in the act of faith he unites himself with Christ, and Christ’s justice replaces his own which was lost by Adam’s fall. However, man can never become entirely virtuous during his life, since his natural evilness can never entirely disappear.[38]

Luther’s doctrine of faith as an indubitable subjective experience of one’s own salvation may at first glance strike one as an extreme contradiction to the intense feeling of doubt which was characteristic for his personality and his teachings up to 1518. Yet, psychologically, this change from doubt to certainty, far from being contradictory, has a causal relation. We must remember what has been said about the nature of this doubt: it was not the rational doubt which is rooted in the freedom of thinking and which dares to question established views. It was the irrational doubt which springs from the isolation and powerlessness of an individual whose attitude toward the world is one of anxiety and hatred. This irrational doubt can never be cured by rational answers; it can only disappear if the individual becomes an integral part of a meaningful world. If this does not happen, as it did not happen with Luther and the middle class which he represented, the doubt can only be silenced, driven underground, so to speak, and this can be done by some formula which promises absolute certainty. *The compulsive quest for certainty,* as we find with Luther, is *not*

the expression of genuine faith but is rooted in the need to conquer the unbearable doubt. Luther's solution is one which we find present in many individuals today, who do not think in theological terms: namely to find certainty by elimination of the isolated individual self, by becoming an instrument in the hands of an overwhelmingly strong power outside of the individual. For Luther this power was God and in unqualified submission he sought certainty. But although he thus succeeded in silencing his doubts to some extent, they never really disappeared; up to his last day he had attacks of doubt which he had to conquer by renewed efforts toward submission. Psychologically, faith has two entirely different meanings. It can be the expression of an inner relatedness to mankind and affirmation of life; or it can be a reaction formation against a fundamental feeling of doubt, rooted in the isolation of the individual and his negative attitude toward life. Luther's faith had that compensatory quality.

It is particularly important to understand the significance of doubt and the attempts to silence it, because this is not only a problem concerning Luther's and, as we shall see soon, Calvin's theology, but it has remained one of the basic problems of modern man. Doubt is the starting point of modern philosophy; the need to silence it had a most powerful stimulus on the development of modern philosophy and science. But although many rational doubts have been solved by rational answers, the irrational doubt has not disappeared and cannot disappear as long as man has not progressed from negative freedom to positive freedom. The modern attempts to silence it, whether they consist in a compulsive striving for success, in the belief that unlimited knowledge of facts can answer the quest for certainty, or in the submission to a leader who assumes the responsibility for "certainty"—all these solutions can only eliminate the *awareness* of doubt. The doubt itself will not disappear as long as man does not overcome his isolation and as long as his place in the world has not become a meaningful one in terms of his human needs.

What is the connection of Luther's doctrines with the psychological situation of all but the rich and powerful toward the end of the Middle Ages? As we have seen, the old order was breaking down. The individual had lost the security of certainty and was threatened by new economic forces, by capitalists and monopolies; the corporative principle was being replaced by competition; the lower classes felt the pressure of growing exploitation. The appeal of Lutheranism to the lower classes differed from

its appeal to the middle class. The poor in the cities, and even more the peasants, were in a desperate situation. They were ruthlessly exploited and deprived of traditional rights and privileges. They were in a revolutionary mood which found expression in peasant uprisings and in revolutionary movements in the cities. The Gospel articulated their hopes and expectations as it had done for the slaves and laborers of early Christianity, and led the poor to seek for freedom and justice. In so far as Luther attacked authority and made the word of the Gospel the center of his teachings, he appealed to these restive masses as other religious movements of an evangelical character had done before him.

Although Luther accepted their allegiance to him and supported them, he could do so only up to a certain point; he had to break the alliance when the peasants went further than attacking the authority of the Church and merely making minor demands for the betterment of their lot. They proceeded to become a revolutionary class which threatened to overthrow all authority and to destroy the foundations of a social order in whose maintenance the middle class was vitally interested. For, in spite of all the difficulties we earlier described, the middle class, even its lower stratum, had privileges to defend against the demands of the poor; and therefore it was intensely hostile to revolutionary movements which aimed to destroy not only the privileges of the aristocracy, the Church, and the monopolies, but their own privileges as well.

The position of the middle class between the very rich and the very poor made its reaction complex and in many ways contradictory. They wanted to uphold law and order, and yet they were themselves vitally threatened by rising capitalism. Even the more successful members of the middle class were not wealthy and powerful as the small group of big capitalists was. They had to fight hard to survive and make progress. The luxury of the moneyed class increased their feeling of smallness and filled them with envy and indignation. As a whole, the middle class was more endangered by the collapse of the feudal order and by rising capitalism than it was helped.

Luther’s picture of man mirrored just this dilemma. Man is free *from* all ties binding him to spiritual authorities, but this very freedom leaves him alone and anxious, overwhelms him with a feeling of his own individual insignificance and powerlessness. This free, isolated individual is crushed by the experience of his individual insignificance. Luther’s theology gives

expression to this feeling of helplessness and doubt. The picture of man which he draws in religious terms describes the situation of the individual as it was brought about by the current social and economic evolution. The member of the middle class was as helpless in face of the new economic forces as Luther described man to be in his relationship to God.

But Luther did more than bring out the feeling of insignificance which already pervaded the social classes to whom he preached—he offered them a solution. By not only accepting his own insignificance but by humiliating himself to the utmost, by giving up every vestige of individual will, by renouncing and denouncing his individual strength, the individual could hope to be acceptable to God. Luther's relationship to God was one of complete submission. In psychological terms his concept of faith means: if you completely submit, if you accept your individual insignificance, then the all-powerful God may be willing to love you and save you. If you get rid of your individual self with all its shortcomings and doubts by utmost self-effacement, you free yourself from the feeling of your own nothingness and can participate in God's glory. Thus, while Luther freed people from the authority of the Church, he made them submit to a much more tyrannical authority, that of a God who insisted on complete submission of man and annihilation of the individual self as the essential condition to his salvation. *Luther's "faith" was the conviction of being loved upon the condition of surrender,* a solution which has much in common with the principle of complete submission of the individual to the state and the "leader."

Luther's awe of authority and his love for it appears also in his political convictions. Although he fought against the authority of the Church, although he was filled with indignation against the new moneyed class—part of which was the upper strata of the clerical hierarchy—and although he supported the revolutionary tendencies of the peasants up to a certain point, yet he postulated submission to worldly authorities, the princes, in the most drastic fashion. "Even if those in authority are evil or without faith, nevertheless the authority and its power is good and from God…. Therefore, where there is power and where it flourishes, there it is and there it remains because God has ordained it." (Letter to the Romans 13:1) Or he says: "God would prefer to suffer the government to exist no matter how evil, rather than allow the rabble to riot, no matter how justified they are in doing so… A prince should remain a prince no matter how

tyrannical he may be. He beheads necessarily only a few since he must have subjects in order to be a ruler."

The other aspect of his attachment to and awe of authority becomes visible in his hatred and contempt for the powerless masses, the "rabble," especially when they went beyond certain limits in their revolutionary attempts. In one of his diatribes he writes the famous words: "Therefore let everyone who can, smite, slay, and stab, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more poisonous, hurtful, or devilish than a rebel. It is just as when one must kill a mad dog; if you do not strike him he will strike you, and a whole land with you."[39]

Luther's personality as well as his teachings shows ambivalence toward authority. On the one hand he is overawed by authority—that of a worldly authority and that of a tyrannical God—and on the other hand he rebels against authority—that of the Church. He shows the same ambivalence in his attitude toward the masses. As far as they rebel within the limits he has set he is with them. But when they attack the authorities he approves of, an intense hatred and contempt for the masses comes to the fore. In the chapter which deals with the psychological mechanism of escape we shall show that this simultaneous love for authority and the hatred against those who are powerless are typical traits of the "authoritarian character."

At this point it is important to understand that Luther's attitude towards secular authority was closely related to his religious teachings. In making the individual feel worthless and insignificant as far as his own merits are concerned, in making him feel like a powerless tool in the hands of God, he deprived man of the self-confidence and of the feeling of human dignity which is the premise for any firm stand against oppressing secular authorities. In the course of the historical evolution the results of Luther's teachings were still more far-reaching. Once the individual had lost his sense of pride and dignity, he was psychologically prepared to lose the feeling which had been characteristic of the medieval thinking, namely, that man, his spiritual salvation, and his spiritual aims were the purpose of life; he was prepared to accept a role in which his life became a means to purposes outside of himself, those of economic productivity and accumulation of capital. Luther's views on economic problems were typically medieval, still more so than Calvin's. He would have abhorred the idea that man's life should become a means for economic ends. But while

his thinking on economic matters was the traditional one, his emphasis on the nothingness of the individual was in contrast and paved the way for a development in which man not only was to obey secular authorities but had to subordinate his life to the ends of economic achievements. In our day this trend has reached a peak in the Fascist emphasis that it is the aim of life to be sacrificed for "higher" powers, for the leader or the racial community.

Calvin's theology, which was to become as important for the Anglo-Saxon countries as Luther's for Germany, exhibits essentially the same spirit as Luther's, both theologically and psychologically. Although he too opposes the authority of the Church and the blind acceptance of its doctrines, religion for him is rooted in the powerlessness of man; self-humiliation and the destruction of human pride are the *Leitmotiv* of his whole thinking. Only he who despises this world can devote himself to the preparation for the future world.[40]

He teaches that we should humiliate ourselves and that this very self-humiliation is the means to reliance on God's strength. "For nothing arouses us to repose all confidence and assurance of mind on the Lord, so much as diffidence of ourselves, and anxiety arising from a consciousness of our own misery." (*Op. cit*., Book Ill, Chapter II, 23.)

He preaches that the individual should not feel that he is his own master. "We are not our own; therefore neither our reason nor our will should predominate in our deliberations and actions. We are not our own; therefore, let us not propose it as our end, to seek what may be expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own; therefore, let us, as far as possible, forget ourselves and all things that are ours. On the contrary, we are God's; to him, therefore, let us live and die. For, as it is the most devastating pestilence which ruins people if they obey themselves, it is the only haven of salvation not to know or to want anything oneself but to be guided by God who walks before us."[41]

Man should not strive for virtue for its own sake. That would lead to nothing but vanity: "For it is an ancient and true observation that there is a world of vices concealed in the soul of man. Nor can you find any other remedy than to deny yourself and discard all selfish considerations, and to devote your whole attention to the pursuit of those things which the Lord requires of you, and which ought to be pursued for this sole reason, because they are pleasing to him." (*Op. cit*., Book III, Chapter 7, 2.)

Calvin, too, denies that good works can lead to salvation. We are completely lacking them: “No work of a pious man ever existed which, if it were examined before the strict judgment of God, did not prove to be damnable.” (*Op. cit*., Book III, Chapter 14, 11.)

If we try to understand the psychological significance of Calvin’s system, the same holds true, in principle, as has been said about Luther’s teachings. Calvin, too, preached to the conservative middle class, to people who felt immensely alone and frightened, whose feelings were expressed in his doctrine of the insignificance and powerlessness of the individual and the futility of his efforts. However, we may assume that there was some slight difference; while Germany in Luther’s time was in a general state of upheaval, in which not only the middle class, but also the peasants and the poor of urban society, were threatened by the rise of capitalism, Geneva was a relatively prosperous community. It had been one of the important fairs in Europe in the first half of the fifteenth century, and although at Calvin’s time it was already overshadowed by Lyons in this respect,[42] it had preserved a good deal of economic solidity.

On the whole, it seems safe to say that Calvin’s adherents were recruited mainly from the conservative middle class,[43] and that also in France, Holland, and England his main adherents were not advanced capitalistic groups but artisans and small businessmen, some of whom were already more prosperous than others but who, as a group, were threatened by the rise of capitalism.[44]

To this social class Calvinism had the same psychological appeal that we have already discussed in connection with Lutheranism. It expressed the feeling of freedom but also of insignificance and powerlessness of the individual. It offered a solution by teaching the individual that by complete submission and self-humiliation he could hope to find new security.

There are a number of subtle differences between Calvin’s and Luther’s teachings which are not important for the main line of thought of this book. Only two points of difference need to be stressed. One is Calvin’s doctrine of predestination. In contrast to the doctrine of predestination as we find it in Augustine, Aquinas and Luther, with Calvin it becomes one of the cornerstones, perhaps the central doctrine, of his whole system. He gives it a new version by assuming that God not only predestines some for grace, but decides that others are destined for eternal damnation. (*Op. cit*., Book III, Chapter 21, 5.)

Salvation or damnation are not results of anything good or bad a man does in his life, but are predetermined by God before man ever comes to life. Why God chose the one and condemned the other is a secret into which man must not try to delve. He did so because it pleased him to show his unlimited power in that way Calvin's God, in spite of all attempts to preserve the idea of God's justice and love, has all the features of a tyrant without any quality of love or even justice. In blatant contradiction to the New Testament, Calvin denies the supreme role of love and says: "For what the Schoolmen advance concerning the priority of charity to faith and hope, is a mere reverie of a distempered imagination…" (*Op. cit.*, Book III, Chapter 2, 41.)

The psychological significance of the doctrine of predestination is a twofold one. It expresses and enhances the feeling of individual powerlessness and insignificance. No doctrine could express more strongly than this the worthlessness of human will and effort. The decision over man's fate is taken completely out of his own hands and there is nothing man can do to change this decision. He is a powerless tool in God's hands. The other meaning of this doctrine, like that of Luther's, consists in its function to silence the irrational doubt which was the same in Calvin and his followers as in Luther. At first glance the doctrine of predestination seems to enhance the doubt rather than silence it. Must not the individual be torn by even more torturing doubts than before to learn that he was predestined either to eternal damnation or to salvation before he was born? How can he ever be sure what his lot will be? Although Calvin did not teach that there was any concrete proof of such certainty, he and his followers actually had the conviction that they belonged to the chosen ones. They got this conviction by the same mechanism of self-humiliation which we have analyzed with regard to Luther's doctrine. Having such conviction, the doctrine of predestination implied utmost certainty; one could not do anything which would endanger the state of salvation, since one's salvation did not depend on one's own actions but was decided upon before one was ever born. Again, as with Luther, the fundamental doubt resulted in the quest for absolute certainty; but though the doctrine of predestination gave such certainty, the doubt remained in the background and had to be silenced again and again by an overgrowing fanatic belief that the religious community to which one belonged represented that part of mankind which had been chosen by God.

Calvin's theory of predestination has one implication which should be explicitly mentioned here, since it has found its most vigorous revival in Nazi ideology: the principle of the basic inequality of men. For Calvin there are two kinds of people—those who are saved and those who are destined to eternal damnation. Since this fate is determined before they are born and without their being able to change it by anything they do or do not do in their lives, the equality of mankind is denied in principle. Men are created unequal. This principle implies also that there is no solidarity between men, since the one factor which is the strongest basis for human solidarity is denied: the equality of man's fate. The Calvinists quite naively thought that they were the chosen ones and that all others were those whom God had condemned to damnation. It is obvious that this belief represented psychologically a deep contempt and hatred for other human beings—as a matter of fact, the same hatred with which they had endowed God. While modern thought has led to an increasing assertion of the equality of men, the Calvinists' principle has never been completely mute. The doctrine that men are basically unequal according to their racial background is confirmation of the same principle with a different rationalization. The psychological implications are the same.

Another and very significant difference from Luther's teachings is the greater emphasis on the importance of moral effort and a virtuous life. Not that the individual can *change his fate* by any of his works, but the very fact that he is able to make the effort is one sign of his belonging to the saved. The virtues man should acquire are: modesty and moderation *(sobrietas),* justice *(iustitia)* in the sense of everybody being given what is his due share, and piousness *(pietas)* which unites man with God. (*Op. cit.*, Book III, Chapter 7, 3.) In the further development of Calvinism, the emphasis on a virtuous life and on the significance of an unceasing effort gains in importance, particularly the idea that success in worldly life, as a result of such efforts, is a sign of salvation.[45]

But the particular emphasis on a virtuous life which was characteristic for Calvinism had also a particular psychological significance. Calvinism emphasized the necessity of unceasing human effort. Man must constantly try to live according to God's word and never lapse in his effort to do so. This doctrine appears to be a contradiction of the doctrine that human effort is of no avail with regard to man's salvation. The fatalistic attitude of not making any effort might seem like a much more appropriate response.

Some psychological considerations, however, show that this is not so. The state of anxiety, the feeling of powerlessness and insignificance, and especially the doubt concerning one's future after death, represent a state of mind which is practically unbearable for anybody. Almost no one stricken with this fear would be able to relax, enjoy life, and be indifferent as to what happened afterwards. One possible way to escape this unbearable state of uncertainty and the paralyzing feeling of one's own insignificance is the very trait which became so prominent in Calvinism: the development of a frantic activity and a striving to do *something.* Activity in this sense assumes a compulsory quality: *the individual has to be active in order to overcome his feeling of doubt and powerlessness.* This kind of effort and activity is not the result of inner strength and self-confidence; it is a desperate escape from anxiety.

This mechanism can be easily observed in attacks of anxiety panic in individuals. A man who expects to receive within a few hours the doctor's diagnosis of his illness—which may be fatal—quite naturally is in a state of anxiety. Usually he will not sit down quietly and wait. Most frequently his anxiety, if it does not paralyze him, will drive him to some sort of more or less frantic activity. He may pace up and down the floor, start asking questions and talk to everybody he can get hold of, clean up his desk, write letters. He may continue his usual kind of work but with added activity and more feverishly. Whatever form his effort assumes it is prompted by anxiety and tends to overcome the feeling of powerlessness by frantic activity.

Effort in the Calvinist doctrine had still another psychological meaning. The fact that one did not tire in that unceasing effort and that one succeeded in one's moral as well as one's secular work was a more or less distinct sign of being one of the chosen ones. The irrationality of such compulsive effort is that *the activity is not meant to create a desired end but serves to indicate whether or not something will occur* which has been determined beforehand, independent of one's own activity or control. This mechanism is a well-known feature of compulsive neurotics. Such persons when afraid of the outcome of an important undertaking may, while awaiting an answer, count the windows of houses or trees on the street. If the number is even, a person feels that things will be all right; if it is uneven, it is a sign that he will fail. Frequently this doubt does not refer to a specific instance but to a person's whole life, and the compulsion to look for "signs" will pervade it accordingly. Often the connection between

counting stones, playing solitaire, gambling, and so on, and anxiety and doubt, is not conscious. A person may play solitaire out of a vague feeling of restlessness and only an analysis might uncover the hidden function of his activity: to reveal the future.

In Calvinism this meaning of effort was part of the religious doctrine. Originally it referred essentially to moral effort, but later on the emphasis was more and more on effort in one's occupation and on the results of this effort, that is, success or failure in business. Success became the sign of God's grace; failure, the sign of damnation.

These considerations show that the compulsion to unceasing effort and work was far from being in contradiction to a basic conviction of man's powerlessness; rather was it the psychological result. Effort and work in this sense assumed an entirely irrational character. They were not to change fate since this was predetermined by God, regardless of any effort on the part of the individual. They served only as a means of forecasting the predetermined fate; while at the same time the frantic effort was a reassurance against an otherwise unbearable feeling of powerlessness.

This new attitude towards effort and work as an aim in itself may be assumed to be the most important psychological change which has happened to man since the end of the Middle Ages. In every society man has to work if he wants to live. Many societies solved the problem by having the work done by slaves, thus allowing the free man to devote himself to "nobler" occupations. In such societies, work was not worthy of a free man. In medieval society, too, the burden of work was unequally distributed among the different classes in the social hierarchy, and there was a good deal of crude exploitation. But the attitude toward work was different from that which developed subsequently in the modern era. Work did not have the abstract character of producing some commodity which might be profitably sold on the market. One worked in response to a concrete demand and with a concrete aim: to earn one's livelihood. There was, as Max Weber particularly has shown, no urge to work more than was necessary to maintain the traditional standard of living. It seems that for some groups of medieval society work was enjoyed as a realization of productive ability; that many others worked because they *had* to and felt this necessity was conditioned by pressure from the outside. What was new in modern society was that men came to be driven to work not so much by

external pressure but by an internal compulsion, which made them work as only a very strict master could have made people do in other societies.

The inner compulsion was more effective in harnessing all energies to work than any outer compulsion can ever be. Against external compulsion there is always a certain amount of rebelliousness which hampers the effectiveness of work or makes people unfit for any differentiated task requiring intelligence, initiative, and responsibility. The compulsion to work by which man was turned into his own slave driver did not hamper these qualities. Undoubtedly capitalism could not have been developed had not the greatest part of man's energy been channeled in the direction of work. There is no other period in history in which free men have given their energy so completely for the one purpose: work. The drive for relentless work was one of the fundamental productive forces, no less important for the development of our industrial system than steam and electricity.

We have so far spoken mainly of the anxiety and of the feeling of powerlessness pervading the personality of the member of the middle class. We must now discuss another trait which we have only touched upon very briefly: his *hostility* and *resentment.* That the middle class developed intense hostility is not surprising. Anybody who is thwarted in emotional and sensual expression and who is also threatened in his very existence will normally react with hostility; as we have seen, the middle class as a whole and especially those of its members who were not yet enjoying the advantages of rising capitalism were thwarted and seriously threatened. Another factor was to increase their hostility: the luxury and power which the small group of capitalists, including the higher dignitaries of the Church, could afford to display. An intense envy against them was the natural result. But while hostility and envy developed, the members of the middle class could not find the direct expression which was possible for the lower classes. These hated the rich who exploited them, they wanted to overthrow their power, and could thus afford to feel and to express their hatred. The upper class also could afford to express aggressiveness directly in the wish for power. The members of the middle class were essentially conservative; they wanted to stabilize society and not uproot it; each of them hoped to become more prosperous and to participate in the general development. Hostility, therefore, was not to be expressed overtly, nor could it even be felt consciously; it had to be repressed. Repression of hostility, however, only removes it from conscious awareness, it does not abolish it.

Moreover, the pent-up hostility, not finding any direct expression, increases to a point where it pervades the whole personality, one's relationship to others and to oneself—but in rationalized and disguised forms.

Luther and Calvin portray this all-pervading hostility. Not only in the sense that these two men, personally, belonged to the ranks of the greatest haters among the leading figures of history, certainly among religious leaders; but, which is more important, in the sense that their doctrines were colored by this hostility and could only appeal to a group itself driven by an intense, repressed hostility. The most striking expression of this hostility is found in their concept of God, especially in Calvin's doctrine. Although we are all familiar with this concept, we often do not fully realize what it means to conceive of God as being as arbitrary and merciless as Calvin's God, who destined part of mankind to eternal damnation without any justification or reason except that this act was an expression of God's power. Calvin himself was, of course, concerned with the obvious objections which could be made against this conception of God; but the more or less subtle constructions he made to uphold the picture of a just and loving God do not sound in the least convincing. This picture of a despotic God, who wants unrestricted power over men and their submission and humiliation, was the projection of the middle class's own hostility and envy.

Hostility or resentment also found expression in the character of relationships to others. The main form which it assumed was moral indignation, which has invariably been characteristic for the lower middle class from Luther's time to Hitler's. While this class was actually envious of those who had wealth and power and could enjoy life, they rationalized this resentment and envy of life in terms of moral indignation and in the conviction that these superior people would be punished by eternal suffering.[46] But the hostile tension against others found expression in still other ways. Calvin's regime in Geneva was characterized by suspicion and hostility on the part of everybody against everybody else, and certainly little of the spirit of love and brotherliness could be discovered in his despotic regime. Calvin distrusted wealth and at the same time had little pity for poverty. In the later development of Calvinism warnings against friendliness towards the stranger, a cruel attitude towards the poor, and a general atmosphere of suspiciousness often appeared.[47]

Aside from the projection of hostility and jealousy onto God and their indirect expression in the form of moral indignation, one other way in

which hostility found expression was in turning it against oneself. We have seen how ardently both Luther and Calvin emphasized the wickedness of man and taught self-humiliation and self-abasement as the basis of all virtue. What they consciously had in mind was certainly nothing but an extreme degree of humility. But to anybody familiar with the psychological mechanisms of self-accusation and self humiliation there can be no doubt that this kind of "humility" is rooted in a violent hatred which, for some reason or other, is blocked from being directed toward the world outside and operates against one's own self. In order to understand this phenomenon fully, it is necessary to realize that the attitudes toward others and toward oneself, far from being contradictory, in principle run parallel. But while hostility against others is often conscious and can be expressed overtly, hostility against oneself is usually (except in pathological cases) unconscious, and finds expression in indirect and rationalized forms. One is a person's active emphasis on his own wickedness and insignificance, of which we have just spoken; another appears under the guise of conscience or duty just as there exists humility which has nothing to do with self-hatred, so there exist genuine demands of conscience and a sense of duty which are not rooted in hostility. This genuine conscience forms a part of integrated personality and the following of its demands is an affirmation of the whole self. However, the sense of "duty" as we find it pervading the life of modern man from the period of the Reformation up to the present in religious or secular rationalizations, is intensely colored by hostility against the self. "Conscience" is a slave driver, put into man by himself. It drives him to act according to wishes and aims which he *believes* to be his own, while they are actually the internalization of external social demands. It drives him with harshness and cruelty, forbidding him pleasure and happiness, making his whole life the atonement for some mysterious sin.[48] It is also the basis of the "inner worldly asceticism" which is so characteristic in early Calvinism and later Puritanism. The hostility in which this modern kind of humility and sense of duty is rooted explains also one otherwise rather baffling contradiction: that such humility goes together with contempt for others, and that self-righteousness has actually replaced love and mercy. Genuine humility and a genuine sense of duty towards one's fellow men could not do this; but self-humiliation and a self-negating "conscience" are only one side of an hostility, the other side of which is contempt for and hatred against others.

On the basis of this brief analysis of the meaning of freedom in the period of the Reformation, it seems appropriate to sum up the conclusions which we have reached with regard to the specific problem of freedom and the general problem of the interaction of economic, psychological, and ideological factors in the social process.

The breakdown of the medieval system of feudal society had one main significance for all classes of society: the individual was left alone and isolated. He was free. This freedom had a twofold result. Man was deprived of the security he had enjoyed, of the unquestionable feeling of belonging, and he was torn loose from the world which had satisfied his quest for security both economically and spiritually. He felt alone and anxious. But he was also free to act and to think independently, to become his own master and do with his life as he could—not as he was told to do.

However, according to the real life situation of the members of different social classes, these two kinds of freedom were of unequal weight. Only the most successful class of society profited from rising capitalism to an extent which gave them real wealth and power. They could expand, conquer, rule, and amass fortunes as a result of their own activity and rational calculations. This new aristocracy of money, combined with that of birth, was in a position where they could enjoy the fruits of the new freedom and acquire a new feeling of mastery and individual initiative. On the other hand, they had to dominate the masses and to fight against each other, and thus their position, too, was not free from a fundamental insecurity and anxiety. But, on the whole, the positive meaning of freedom was dominant for the new capitalist. It was expressed in the culture which grew on the soil of the new aristocracy, the culture of the Renaissance. In its art and in its philosophy it expressed the new spirit of human dignity, will, and mastery, although often enough despair and skepticism also. The same emphasis on the strength of individual activity and will is to be found in the theological teachings of the Catholic Church in the late Middle Ages. The Schoolmen of that period did not rebel against authority, they accepted its guidance; but they stressed the positive meaning of freedom, man’s share in the determination of his fate, his strength, his dignity, and the freedom of his will.

On the other hand, the lower classes, the poor population of the cities, and especially the peasants, were impelled by a new quest for freedom and an ardent hope to end the growing economic and personal oppression. They

had little to lose and much to gain. They were not interested in dogmatic subtleties, but rather in the fundamental principles of the Bible: brotherliness and justice. Their hopes took active form in a number of political revolts and in religious movements which were characterized by the uncompromising spirit typical of the very beginning of Christianity.

Our main interest, however, has been taken up by the reaction of the middle class. Rising capitalism, although it made also for their increased independence and initiative, was greatly a threat. In the beginning of the sixteenth century the individual of the middle class could not yet gain much power and security from the new freedom. Freedom brought isolation and personal insignificance more than strength and confidence. Besides that, he was filled with burning resentment against the luxury and power of the wealthy classes, including the hierarchy of the Roman Church. Protestantism gave expression to the feelings of insignificance and resentment; it destroyed the confidence of man in God's unconditional love; it taught man to despise and distrust himself and others; it made him a tool instead of an end; it capitulated before secular power and relinquished the principle that secular power is not justified because of its mere existence if it contradicts moral principles; and in doing all this it relinquished elements that had been the foundations of Judeo-Christian tradition. Its doctrines presented a picture of the individual, God, and the world, in which these feelings were justified by the belief that the insignificance and powerlessness which an individual felt came from the qualities of man as such and that he ought to feel as he felt.

Thereby the new religious doctrines not only gave expression to what the average member of the middle class felt, but, by rationalizing and systematizing this attitude, they also increased and strengthened it. However, they did more than that; they also showed the individual a way to cope with his anxiety. They taught him that by fully accepting his powerlessness and the evilness of his nature, by considering his whole life an atonement for his sins, by the utmost self-humiliation, and also by unceasing effort, he could overcome his doubt and his anxiety; that by complete submission he could be loved by God and could at least hope to belong to those whom God had decided to save. Protestantism was the answer to the human needs of the frightened, uprooted, and isolated individual who had to orient and to relate himself to a new world. The new character structure, resulting from economic and social changes and

intensified by religious doctrines, became in its turn an important factor in shaping the further social and economic development. Those very qualities which were rooted in this character structure—compulsion to work, passion for thrift, the readiness to make one's life a tool for the purposes of an extra personal power, asceticism, and a compulsive sense of duty—were character traits which became productive forces in capitalistic society and without which modern economic and social development are unthinkable; they were the specific forms into which human energy was shaped and in which it became one of the productive forces within the social process. To act in accord with the newly formed character traits was advantageous from the standpoint of economic necessities; it was also satisfying psychologically, since such action answered the needs and anxieties of this new kind of personality. To put the same principle in more general terms: the social process, by determining the mode of life of the individual, that is, his relation to others and to work, molds his character structure; new ideologies—religious, philosophical, or political—result from and appeal to this changed character structure and thus intensify, satisfy, and stabilize it; the newly formed character traits in their turn become important factors in further economic development and influence the social process; while originally they have developed as a reaction to the threat of new economic forces, they slowly become productive forces furthering and intensifying the new economic development.[49]

IV THE TWO ASPECTS OF FREEDOM FOR MODERN MAN

The previous chapter has been devoted to an analysis of the psychological meaning of the main doctrines of Protestantism. It showed that the new religious doctrines were an answer to psychic needs which in themselves were brought about by the collapse of the medieval social system and by the beginnings of capitalism. The analysis centered about the problem of freedom in its twofold meaning; it showed that freedom from the traditional bonds of medieval society, though giving the individual a new feeling of independence, at the same time made him feel alone and isolated, filled him with doubt and anxiety, and drove him into new submission and into a compulsive and irrational activity.

In this chapter, I wish to show that the further development of capitalistic society affected personality in the same direction which it had started to take in the period of the Reformation.

By the doctrines of Protestantism, man was psychologically prepared for the role he was to play under the modern industrial system. This system, its practice, and the spirit which grew out of it, reaching every aspect of life, molded the whole personality of man and accentuated the contradictions which we have discussed in the previous chapter: it developed the individual—and made him more helpless; it increased freedom—and created dependencies of a new kind. We do not attempt to describe the effect of capitalism on the whole character structure of man, since we are focused only on one aspect of this general problem: the dialectic character of the process of growing freedom. Our aim will be to show that the structure of modern society affects man in two ways simultaneously: he becomes more independent, self-reliant, and critical, and he becomes more isolated, alone, and afraid. The understanding of the whole problem of freedom depends on the very ability to see both sides of the process and not to lose track of one side while following the other.

This is difficult because conventionally we think in non-dialectical terms and are prone to doubt whether two contradictory trends can result simultaneously from one cause. Furthermore, the negative side of freedom, the burden which it puts upon man, is difficult to realize, especially for those whose heart is with the cause of freedom. Because in the fight for freedom in modern history the attention was focused upon combating *old* forms of authority and restraint, it was natural that one should feel that the more these traditional restraints were eliminated, the more freedom one had gained. We fail sufficiently to recognize, however, that although man has rid himself from old enemies of freedom, new enemies of a different nature have arisen; enemies which are not essentially external restraints, but internal factors blocking the full realization of the freedom of personality. We believe, for instance, that freedom of worship constitutes one of the final victories for freedom. We do not sufficiently recognize that while it is a victory against those powers of Church and State which did not allow man to worship according to his own conscience, the modern individual has lost to a great extent the inner capacity to have faith in anything which is not provable by the methods of the natural sciences. Or, to choose another example, we feel that freedom of speech is the last step in the march of victory of freedom. We forget that, although freedom of speech constitutes an important victory in the battle against *old* restraints, modern man is in a position where much of what "he" thinks and says are the things that everybody else thinks and says; that he has not acquired the ability to think originally—that is, for himself—which alone gives meaning to his claim that nobody can interfere with the expression of his thoughts. Again, we are proud that in his conduct of life man has become free from external authorities, which tell him what to do and what not to do. We neglect the role of the anonymous authorities like public opinion and "common sense," which are so powerful because of our profound readiness to conform to the expectations everybody has about ourselves and our equally profound fear of being different. In other words, we are fascinated by the growth of freedom from powers *outside* of ourselves and are blinded to the fact of *inner* restraints, compulsions, and fears, which tend to undermine the meaning of the victories freedom has won against its traditional enemies. We therefore are prone to think that the problem of freedom is exclusively that of gaining still more freedom of the kind we have gained in the course of modern history, and to believe that the defense of freedom against such

powers that deny such freedom is all that is necessary. We forget that, although each of the liberties which have been won must be defended with utmost vigor, the problem of freedom is not only a quantitative one, but a qualitative one; that we not only have to preserve and increase the traditional freedom, but that we have to gain a new kind of freedom, one which enables us to realize our own individual self, to have faith in this self and in life.

Any critical evaluation of the effect which the industrial system had on this kind of inner freedom must start with the full understanding of the enormous progress which capitalism has meant for the development of human personality. As a matter of fact, any critical appraisal of modern society which neglects this side of the picture must prove to be rooted in an irrational romanticism and is suspect of criticizing capitalism, not for the sake of progress, but for the sake of the destruction of the most important achievements of man in modern history.

What Protestantism had started to do in freeing man spiritually, capitalism continued to do mentally, socially, and politically. Economic freedom was the basis of this development, the middle class was its champion. The individual was no longer bound by a fixed social system, based on tradition and with a comparatively small margin for personal advancement beyond the traditional limits. He was allowed and expected to succeed in personal economic gains as far as his diligence, intelligence, courage, thrift, or luck would lead him. His was the chance of success, his was the risk to lose and to be one of those killed or wounded in the fierce economic battle in which each one fought against everybody else. Under the feudal system the limits of his life expansion had been laid out before he was born; but under the capitalistic system the individual, particularly the member of the middle class, had a chance—in spite of many limitations—to succeed on the basis of his own merits and actions. He saw a goal before his eyes toward which he could strive and which he often had a good chance to attain. He learned to rely on himself, to make responsible decisions, to give up both soothing and terrifying superstitions. Man became increasingly free from the bondage of nature; he mastered natural forces to a degree unheard and undreamed of in previous history. Men became equal; differences of caste and religion, which once had been natural boundaries blocking the unification of the human race, disappeared, and men learned to recognize each other as human beings. The world became increasingly free from

mystifying elements; man began to see himself objectively and with fewer and fewer illusions. Politically freedom grew too. On the strength of its economic position the rising middle class could conquer political power and the newly won political power created increased possibilities for economic progress. The great revolutions in England and France and the fight for American independence are the milestones marking this development. The peak in the evolution of freedom in the political sphere was the modern democratic state based on the principle of equality of all men and the equal right of everybody to share in the government by representatives of his own choosing. Each one was supposed to be able to act according to his own interest and at the same time with a view to the common welfare of the nation.

In one word, capitalism not only freed man from traditional bonds, but it also contributed tremendously to the increasing of positive freedom, to the growth of an active, critical, responsible self.

However, while this was *one* effect capitalism had on the process of growing freedom, at the same time it made the individual more alone and isolated and imbued him with a feeling of insignificance and powerlessness.

The first factor to be mentioned here is one of the general characteristics of capitalistic economy: the principle of individualistic activity In contrast to the feudal system of the Middle Ages under which everybody had a fixed place in an ordered and transparent social system, capitalistic economy put the individual entirely on his own feet. What he did, how he did it, whether he succeeded or whether he failed, was entirely his own affair. That this principle furthered the process of individualization is obvious and is always mentioned as an important item on the credit side of modern culture. But in furthering “freedom from,” this principle helped to sever all ties between one individual and the other and thereby isolated and separated the individual from his fellow men. This development had been prepared by the teachings of the Reformation. In the Catholic Church the relationship of the individual to God had been based on membership in the Church. The Church was the link between him and God, thus on the one hand restricting his individuality, but on the other hand letting him face God as an integral part of a group. Protestantism made the individual face God alone. Faith in Luther’s sense was an entirely subjective experience and with Calvin the conviction of salvation also had this same subjective quality. The individual facing God’s might alone could not help feeling

crushed and seeking salvation in complete submission. Psychologically this spiritual individualism is not too different from the economic individualism. In both instances the individual is completely alone and in his isolation faces the superior power, be it of God, of competitors, or of impersonal economic forces. *The individualistic relationship to God was the psychological preparation for the individualistic character of man's secular activities.*

While the individualistic character of the economic system is an undisputed fact and only the effect this economic individualism has in increasing the individual's aloneness may appear doubtful, the point we are going to discuss now contradicts some of the most widespread conventional concepts about capitalism. These concepts assume that in modern society man has become the center and purpose of all activity, that what he does he does for himself, that the principle of self-interest and egotism are the all-powerful motivations of human activity. It follows from what has been said in the beginning of this chapter that we believe this to be true to some extent. Man has done much for himself, for his own purposes, in these last four hundred years. Yet much of what seemed to him to be his purpose was not his, if we mean by "him," not "the worker," "the manufacturer," but the concrete human being with all his emotional, intellectual, and sensuous potentialities. Besides the affirmation of the individual which capitalism brought about, it also led to a self-negation and asceticism which is the direct continuation of the Protestant spirit.

In order to explain this thesis we must mention first a fact which has been already stated in the previous chapter. In the medieval system capital was the servant of man, but in the modern system it became his master. In the medieval world economic activities were a means to an end; the end was life itself, or—as the Catholic Church understood it—the spiritual salvation of man. Economic activities are necessary, even riches can serve God's purposes, but all external activity has only significance and dignity as far as it furthers the aims of life. Economic activity and the wish for gain for its own sake appeared as irrational to the medieval thinker as their absence appears to modern thought.

In capitalism economic activity, success, material gains, become ends in themselves. It becomes man's fate to contribute to the growth of the economic system, to amass capital, not for purposes of his own happiness or salvation, but as an end in itself. Man became a cog in the vast economic

machine—an important one if he had much capital, an insignificant one if he had none—but always a cog to serve a purpose outside of himself. This readiness for submission of one's self to extrahuman ends was actually prepared by Protestantism, although nothing was further from Luther's or Calvin's mind than the approval of such supremacy of economic activities. But in their theological teaching they had laid the ground for this development by breaking man's spiritual backbone, his feeling of dignity and pride, by teaching him that activity had no further aims outside of himself.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, one main point in Luther's teachings was his emphasis on the evilness of human nature, the uselessness of his will and of his efforts. Calvin placed the same emphasis on the wickedness of man and put in the center of his whole system the idea that man must humiliate his self-pride to the utmost; and furthermore, that the purpose of man's life is exclusively God's glory and nothing of his own. Thus Luther and Calvin psychologically prepared man for the role which he had to assume in modern society: of feeling his own self to be insignificant and of being ready to subordinate his life exclusively for purposes which were not his own. Once man was ready to become nothing but the means for the glory of a God who represented neither justice nor love, he was sufficiently prepared to accept the role of a servant to the economic machine—and eventually a "Führer."

The subordination of the individual as a means to economic ends is based on the peculiarities of the capitalistic mode of production, which makes the accumulation of capital the purpose and aim of economic activity. One works for profit's sake, but the profit one makes is not made to be spent but to be invested as new capital; this increased capital brings new profits which again are invested, and so on in a circle. There were of course always capitalists who spent money for luxuries or as "conspicuous waste"; but the classic representatives of capitalism enjoyed working—not spending. This principle of accumulating capital instead of using it for consumption is the premise of the grandiose achievements of our modern industrial system. If man had not had the ascetic attitude to work and the desire to invest the fruits of his work for the purpose of developing the productive capacities of the economic system, our progress in mastering nature never could have been made; it is this growth of the productive forces of society which for the first time in history permits us to visualize a

future in which the continual struggle for the satisfaction of material needs will cease. Yet, while the principle of work for the sake of the accumulation of capital objectively is of enormous value for the progress of mankind, subjectively it has made man work for extra personal ends, made him a servant to the very machine he built, and thereby has given him a feeling of personal insignificance and powerlessness.

So far we have discussed those individuals in modern society who had capital and were able to turn their profits into new capital investment. Regardless of whether they were big or small capitalists, their life was devoted to the fulfillment of their economic function, the amassing of capital. But what about those who had no capital and who had to earn a living by selling their labor? The psychological effect of their economic position was not much different from that of the capitalist. In the first place, being employed meant that they were dependent on the laws of the market, on prosperity and depression, on the effect of technical improvements in the hands of their employer. They were manipulated directly by him, and to them he became the representative of a superior power to which they had to submit. This was especially true for the position of workers up to and during the nineteenth century. Since then the trade-union movement has given the worker some power of his own and thereby is changing the situation in which he is nothing but an object of manipulation.

But aside from this direct and personal dependence of the worker on the employer, he, like the whole of society, has been imbued by the spirit of asceticism and submission to extra personal ends which we have described as characteristic for the owner of capital. This is not surprising. In any society the spirit of the whole culture is determined by the spirit of those groups that are most powerful in that society. This is so partly because these groups have the power to control the educational system, schools, church, press, theater, and thereby to imbue the whole population with their own ideas; furthermore, these powerful groups carry so much prestige that the lower classes are more than ready to accept and imitate their values and to identify themselves psychologically.

Up to this point we have maintained that the mode of capitalistic production made man an instrument for suprapersonal economic purposes, and increased the spirit of asceticism and individual insignificance for which Protestantism had been the psychological preparation. This thesis, however, conflicts with the fact that modern man seems to be motivated not

by an attitude of sacrifice and asceticism but, on the contrary, by an extreme degree of egotism and by the pursuit of self-interest. How can we reconcile the fact that objectively he became a servant to ends which were not his, and yet that subjectively he believed himself to be motivated by his self-interest? How can we reconcile the spirit of Protestantism and its emphasis on unselfishness with the modern doctrine of egotism which claims, to use Machiavelli's formulation, that egotism is the strongest motive power of human behavior, that the desire for personal advantage is stronger than all moral considerations, that a man would rather see his own father die than lose his fortune? Can this contradiction be explained by the assumption that the emphasis on unselfishness was only an ideology to cover up the underlying egotism? Although this may be true to some extent, we do not believe that this is the full answer. To indicate in what direction the answer seems to lie, we have to concern ourselves with the psychological intricacies of the problem of selfishness.[50]

The assumption underlying the thinking of Luther and Calvin and also that of Kant and Freud, is: Selfishness is identical with self-love. To love others is a virtue, to love oneself is a sin. Furthermore, love for others and love for oneself are mutually exclusive.

Theoretically we meet here with a fallacy concerning the nature of love. Love is not primarily "caused" by a specific object, but a lingering quality in a person which is only actualized by a certain "object." Hatred is a passionate wish for destruction; love is a passionate affirmation of an "object"; it is not an "affect" but an active striving and inner relatedness, the aim of which is the happiness, growth, and freedom of its object.[51] It is a readiness which, in principle, can turn to any person and object including ourselves. Exclusive love is a contradiction in itself. To be sure, it is not accidental that a certain person becomes the "object" of manifest love. The factors conditioning such a specific choice are too numerous and too complex to be discussed here. The important point, however, is that love for a particular "object" is only the actualization and concentration of lingering love with regard to one person; it is not, as the idea of romantic love would have it, that there is only *the* one person in the world whom one can love, that it is the great chance of one's life to find that person, and that love for him results in a withdrawal from all others. The kind of love which can only be experienced with regard to one person demonstrates by this very fact that it is not love but a sado-masochistic attachment. The basic affirmation

contained in love is directed toward the beloved person as an incarnation of essentially human qualities. Love for one person implies love for man as such. Love for man as such is not, as it is frequently supposed to be, an abstraction coming "after" the love for a specific person, or an enlargement of the experience with a specific "object"; it is its premise, although, genetically, it is acquired in the contact with concrete individuals.

From this it follows that my own self, in principle, is as much an object of my love as another person. The affirmation of my own life, happiness, growth, freedom, is rooted in the presence of the basic readiness of and ability for such an affirmation. If an individual has this readiness, he has it also toward himself; if he can only "love" others, he cannot love at all.

Selfishness is not identical with self-love but with its very opposite. Selfishness is one kind of greediness. Like all greediness, it contains an insatiability, as a consequence of which there is never any real satisfaction. Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction. Close observation shows that while the selfish person is always anxiously concerned with himself, he is never satisfied, is always restless, always driven by the fear of not getting enough, of missing something, of being deprived of something. He is filled with burning envy of anyone who might have more. If we observe still closer, especially the unconscious dynamics, we find that this type of person is basically not fond of himself, but deeply dislikes himself.

The puzzle in this seeming contradiction is easy to solve. Selfishness is rooted in this very lack of fondness for oneself. The person who is not fond of himself, who does not approve of himself, is in constant anxiety concerning his own self. He has not the inner security which can exist only on the basis of genuine fondness and affirmation. He must be concerned about himself, greedy to get everything for himself, since basically he lacks security and satisfaction. The same holds true with the so-called narcissistic person, who is not so much concerned with getting things for himself as with admiring himself. While on the surface it seems that these persons are very much in love with themselves, they actually are not fond of themselves, and their narcissism—like selfishness—is an overcompensation for the basic lack of self-love. Freud has pointed out that the narcissistic person has withdrawn his love from others and turned it toward his own

person. Although the first part of this statement is true, the second is a fallacy He loves neither others nor himself.

Let us return now to the question which led us into this psychological analysis of selfishness. We found ourselves confronted with the contradiction that modern man believes himself to be motivated by self-interest and yet that actually his life is devoted to aims which are not his own; in the same way that Calvin felt that the only purpose of man's existence was to be not himself but God's glory. We tried to show that selfishness is rooted in the lack of affirmation and love for the real self, that is, for the whole concrete human being with all his potentialities. The "self" in the interest of which modern man acts is the *social* self, a self which is essentially constituted by the role the individual is supposed to play and which in reality is merely the subjective disguise for the objective social function of man in society. Modern selfishness is the greed that is rooted in the frustration of the real self and whose object is the social self. While modern man seems to be characterized by utmost assertion of the self, actually his self has been weakened and reduced to a segment of the total self—intellect and will power—to the exclusion of all other parts of the total personality.

Even if this is true, has not the increasing mastery over nature resulted in an increased strength of the individual self? This is true to some extent, and inasmuch as it is true it concerns the positive side of individual development which we do not want to lose track of. But although man has reached a remarkable degree of mastery of nature, society is not in control of the very forces it has created. The rationality of the system of production, in its technical aspects, is accompanied by the irrationality of our system of production in its social aspects. Economic crises, unemployment, war, govern man's fate. Man has built his world; he has built factories and houses, he produces cars and clothes, he grows grain and fruit. But he has become estranged from the product of his own hands, he is not really the master any more of the world he has built; on the contrary, this man-made world has become his master, before whom he bows down, whom he tries to placate or to manipulate as best he can. The work of his own hands has become his God. He seems to be driven by self-interest, but in reality his total self with all its concrete potentialities has become an instrument for the purposes of the very machine his hands have built. He keeps up the illusion of being the center of the world, and yet he is pervaded by an

intense sense of insignificance and powerlessness which his ancestors once consciously felt toward God.

Modern man's feeling of isolation and powerlessness is increased still further by the character which all his human relationships have assumed. The concrete relationship of one individual to another has lost its direct and human character and has assumed a spirit of manipulation and instrumentality. In all social and personal relations the laws of the market are the rule. It is obvious that the relationship between competitors has to be based on mutual human indifference. Otherwise any one of them would be paralyzed in the fulfillment of his economic tasks—to fight each other and not to refrain from the actual economic destruction of each other if necessary.

The relationship between employer and employee is permeated by the same spirit of indifference. The word "employer" contains the whole story: the owner of capital employs another human being as he "employs" a machine. They both use each other for the pursuit of their economic interests; their relationship is one in which both are means to an end, both are instrumental to each other. It is not a relationship of two human beings who have any interest in the other outside of this mutual usefulness. The same instrumentality is the rule in the relationship between the businessman and his customer. The customer is an object to be manipulated, not a concrete person whose aims the businessman is interested to satisfy. The attitude toward work has the quality of instrumentality; in contrast to a medieval artisan the modern manufacturer is not primarily interested in what he produces; he produces essentially in order to make a profit from his capital investment, and what he produces depends essentially on the market which promises that the investment of capital in a certain branch will prove to be profitable.

Not only the economic, but also the personal relations between men have this character of alienation; instead of relations between human beings, they assume the character of relations between things. But perhaps the most important and the most devastating instance of this spirit of instrumentality and alienation is the individual's relationship to his own self.[52] Man does not only sell commodities, he sells himself and feels himself to be a commodity The manual laborer sells his physical energy; the businessman, the physician, the clerical employee, sell their "personality" They have to have a "personality" if they are to sell their products or

services. This personality should be pleasing, but besides that its possessor should meet a number of other requirements: he should have energy, initiative, this, that, or the other, as his particular position may require. As with any other commodity it is the market which decides the value of these human qualities, yes, even their very existence. If there is no use for the qualities a person offers, he has none; just as an unsalable commodity is valueless though it might have its use value. Thus, the self-confidence, the "feeling of self," is merely an indication of what others think of the person. It is not *he* who is convinced of his value regardless of popularity and his success on the market. If he is sought after, he is somebody; if he is not popular, he is simply nobody. This dependence of self-esteem on the success of the "personality" is the reason why for modern man popularity has this tremendous importance. On it depends not only whether or not one goes ahead in practical matters, but also whether one can keep up one's self-esteem or whether one falls into the abyss of inferiority feelings.[53]

We have tried to show that the new freedom which capitalism brought for the individual added to the effect which the religious freedom of Protestantism already had had upon him. The individual became more alone, isolated, became an instrument in the hands of overwhelmingly strong forces outside of himself; he became an "individual," but a bewildered and insecure individual. There were factors to help him overcome the overt manifestations of this underlying insecurity. In the first place his self was backed up by the possession of property. "He" as a person and the property he owned could not be separated. A man's clothes or his house were parts of his self just as much as his body. The less he felt he was being somebody the more he needed to have possessions. If the individual had no property or lost it, he was lacking an important part of his "self" and to a certain extent was not considered to be a full-fledged person, either by others or by himself.

Other factors backing up the self were prestige and power. They are partly the outcome of the possession of property, partly the direct result of success in the fields of competition. The admiration by others and the power over them, added to the support which property gave, backed up the insecure individual self.

For those who had little property and social prestige, the family was a source of individual prestige. There the individual could feel like "somebody." He was obeyed by wife and children, he was the center of the

stage, and he naively accepted his role as his natural right. He might be a nobody in his social relations, but he was a king at home. Aside from the family, the national pride (in Europe frequently class-pride) gave him a sense of importance also. Even if he was nobody personally, he was proud to belong to a group which he could feel was superior to other comparable groups.

These factors supporting the weakened self must be distinguished from those factors which we spoke of at the beginning of this chapter: the factual economic and political freedom, the opportunity for individual initiative, the growing rational enlightenment. These latter factors actually strengthened the self and led to the development of individuality, independence, and rationality. The supporting factors, on the other hand, only helped to compensate for insecurity and anxiety. They did not uproot them but covered them up, and thus helped the individual to feel secure consciously; but this feeling was partly only on the surface and lasted only to the extent to which the supporting factors were present.

Any detailed analysis of European and American history of the period between the Reformation and our own day could show how the two contradictory trends inherent in the evolution of "freedom from to freedom to" run parallel—or rather, are continuously interwoven. Unfortunately such an analysis goes beyond the scope of this book and must be reserved for another publication. At some periods and in certain social groups human freedom in its positive sense—strength and dignity of the self—was the dominant factor; broadly speaking this happened in England, France, America, and Germany when the middle class won its victories, economically and politically, over the representatives of an older order. In this fight for positive freedom the middle class could recur to that side of Protestantism which emphasized human autonomy and dignity; while the Catholic Church allied herself with those groups which had to fight the liberation of man in order to preserve their own privileges.

In the philosophical thinking of the modern era we find also that the two aspects of freedom remain interwoven as they had already been in the theological doctrines of the Reformation. Thus for Kant and Hegel autonomy and freedom of the individual are the central postulates of their systems, and yet they make the individual subordinate to the purposes of an all-powerful state. The philosophers of the period of the French Revolution, and in the nineteenth century Feuerbach, Marx, Stirner, and Nietzsche, have

again in an uncompromising way expressed the idea that the individual should not be subject to any purposes external to his own growth or happiness. The reactionary philosophers of the same century, however, explicitly postulated the subordination of the individual under spiritual and secular authority. The second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth show the trend for human freedom in its positive sense at its peak. Not only did the middle class participate in it, but also the working class became an active and free agent, fighting for its own economic aims and at the same time for the broader aims of humanity.

With the monopolistic phase of capitalism as it developed increasingly in the last decades, the respective weight of both trends for human freedom seems to have changed. Those factors which tend to weaken the individual self have gained, while those strengthening the individual have relatively lost in weight. The individual's feeling of powerlessness and aloneness has increased, his "freedom" from all traditional bonds has become more pronounced, his possibilities for individual economic achievement have narrowed down. He feels threatened by gigantic forces and the situation resembles in many ways that of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The most important factor in this development is the increasing power of monopolistic capital. The concentration of capital (not of wealth) in certain sectors of our economic system restricted the possibilities for the success of individual initiative, courage, and intelligence. In those sectors in which monopolistic capital has won its victories the economic independence of many has been destroyed. For those who struggle on, especially for a large part of the middle class, the fight assumes the character of a battle against such odds that the feeling of confidence in personal initiative and courage is replaced by a feeling of powerlessness and hopelessness. An enormous though secret power over the whole of society is exercised by a small group, on the decisions of which depends the fate of a large part of society. The inflation in Germany, 1923, or the American crash, 1929, increased the feeling of insecurity and shattered for many the hope of getting ahead by one's own efforts and the traditional belief in the unlimited possibilities of success.

The small- or middle-sized businessman who is virtually threatened by the overwhelming power of superior capital may very well continue to make profits and to preserve his independence; but the threat hanging over his head has increased his insecurity and powerlessness far beyond what it

used to be. In his fight against monopolistic competitors he is staked against giants, whereas he used to fight against equals. But the psychological situation of those independent businessmen for whom the development of modern industry has created new economic functions is also different from that of the old independent businessmen. One illustration of this difference is seen in a type of independent businessman who is sometimes quoted as an example of the growth of a new type of middle-class existence: the owners of gas stations. Many of them are economically independent. They own their business just like a man who owned a grocery store or the tailor who made men's suits. But what a difference between the old and the new type of independent businessman. The grocery-store owner needed a good deal of knowledge and skill. He had a choice of a number of wholesale merchants to buy from and he could pick them according to what he deemed the best prices and qualities; he had many individual customers whose needs he had to know, whom he had to advise in their buying, and with regard to whom he had to decide whether or not to give them credit. On the whole, the role of the old-fashioned businessman was not only one of independence but also one requiring skill, individualized service, knowledge, and activity. The situation of the gas-station owner, on the other hand, is entirely different. There is the one merchandise he sells: oil and gas. He is limited in his bargaining position with the oil companies. He mechanically repeats the same act of filling in gasoline and oil, again and again. There is less room for skill, initiative, individual activity, than the old-time grocery-store owner had. His profit is determined by two factors: the price he has to pay for the gasoline and oil, and the number of motorists who stop at his gas station. Both factors are largely outside of his control; he just functions as an agent between wholesaler and customer. Psychologically it makes little difference whether he is employed by the concern or whether he is an "independent" businessman; he is merely a cog in the vast machine of distribution.

As to the new middle class consisting of white-collar workers, whose numbers have grown with the expansion of big business, it is obvious that their position is very different from that of the old-type, small, independent businessman. One might argue that although they are not independent any longer in a formal sense, actually the opportunities for the development of initiative and intelligence as a basis for success are as great as or even greater than they were for the old-fashioned tailor or grocery-store owner.

This is certainly true in a sense, although it may be doubtful to what extent. But psychologically the white-collar worker's situation is different. He is part of a vast economic machine, has a highly specialized task, is in fierce competition with hundreds of others who are in the same position, and is mercilessly fired if he falls behind. In short, even if his chances for success are sometimes greater, he has lost a great deal of the security and independence of the old businessman; and he has been turned into a cog, sometimes small, sometimes larger, of a machinery which forces its tempo upon him, which he cannot control, and in comparison with which he is utterly insignificant.

The psychological effect of the vastness and superior power of big enterprise has also its effect on the worker. In the smaller enterprise of the old days, the worker knew his boss personally and was familiar with the whole enterprise which he was able to survey; although he was hired and fired according to the law of the market, there was some concrete relation to his boss and the business which gave him a feeling of knowing the ground on which he stood. The man in a plant which employs thousands of workers is in a different position. The boss has become an abstract figure—he never sees him; the "management" is an anonymous power with which he deals indirectly and toward which he as an individual is insignificant. The enterprise has such proportions that he cannot see beyond the small sector of it connected with his particular job.

This situation has been somewhat balanced by the trade unions. They have not only improved the economic position of the worker, but have also had the important psychological effect of giving him a feeling of strength and significance in comparison with the giants he is dealing with. Unfortunately many unions themselves have grown into mammoth organizations in which there is little room for the initiative of the individual member. He pays his dues and votes from time to time but here again he is a small cog in a large machine. It is of utmost importance that the unions become organs supported by the active co-operation of each member and of organizing them in such a way that each member may actively participate in the life of the organization and feel responsible for what is going on.

The insignificance of the individual in our era concerns not only his role as a businessman, employee, or manual laborer, but also his role as a customer. A drastic change has occurred in the role of the customer in the last decades. The customer who went into a retail store owned by an

independent businessman was sure to get personal attention: his individual purchase was important to the owner of the store; he was received like somebody who mattered, his wishes were studied; the very act of buying gave him a feeling of importance and dignity. How different is the relationship of a customer to a department store. He is impressed by the vastness of the building, the number of employees, the profusion of commodities displayed; all this makes him feel small and unimportant by comparison. As an individual he is of no importance to the department store. He is important as “a” customer; the store does not want to lose him, because this would indicate that there was something wrong and it might mean that the store would lose other customers for the same reason. As an abstract customer he is important; as a concrete customer he is utterly unimportant. There is nobody who is glad about his coming, nobody who is particularly concerned about his wishes. The act of buying has become similar to going to the post office and buying stamps.

This situation is still more emphasized by the methods of modern advertising. The sales talk of the old-fashioned businessman was essentially rational. He knew his merchandise, he knew the needs of the customer, and on the basis of this knowledge he tried to sell. To be sure, his sales talk was not entirely objective and he used persuasion as much as he could; yet, in order to be efficient, it had to be a rather rational and sensible kind of talk. A vast sector of modern advertising is different; it does not appeal to reason but to emotion; like any other kind of hypnoid suggestion, it tries to impress its objects emotionally and then make them submit intellectually. This type of advertising impresses the customer by all sorts of means: by repetition of the same formula again and again; by the influence of an authoritative image, like that of a society lady or of a famous boxer, who smokes a certain brand of cigarette; by attracting the customer and at the same time weakening his critical abilities by the sex appeal of a pretty girl; by terrorizing him with the threat of “b.o.” or “halitosis”; or yet again by stimulating daydreams about a sudden change in one’s whole course of life brought about by buying a certain shirt or soap. All these methods are essentially irrational; they have nothing to do with the qualities of the merchandise, and they smother and kill the critical capacities of the customer like an opiate or outright hypnosis. They give him a certain satisfaction by their daydreaming qualities just as the movies do, but at the same time they increase his feeling of smallness and powerlessness.

As a matter of fact, these methods of dulling the capacity for critical thinking are more dangerous to our democracy than many of the open attacks against it, and more immoral—in terms of human integrity—than the indecent literature, publication of which we punish. The consumer movement has attempted to restore the customer's critical ability, dignity, and sense of significance, and thus operates in a direction similar to the trade-union movement. So far, however, its scope has not grown beyond modest beginnings.

What holds true in the economic sphere is also true in the political sphere. In the early days of democracy there were various kinds of arrangements in which the individual would concretely and actively participate in voting for a certain decision or for a certain candidate for office. The questions to be decided were familiar to him, as were the candidates; the act of voting, often done in a meeting of the whole population of a town, had a quality of concreteness in which the individual really counted. Today the voter is confronted by mammoth parties which are just as distant and as impressive as the mammoth organizations of industry. The issues are complicated and made still more so by all sorts of methods to befog them. The voter may see something of his candidate around election time; but since the days of the radio, he is not likely to see him so often, thus losing one of the last means of sizing up "his" candidate. Actually he is offered a choice between two or three candidates by the party machines; but these candidates are not of "his" choosing, he and they know little of each other, and their relationship is as abstract as most other relationships have become.

Like the effect of advertising upon the customer, the methods of political propaganda tend to increase the feeling of insignificance of the individual voter. Repetition of slogans and emphasis on factors which have nothing to do with the issue at stake numb his critical capacities. The clear and rational appeal to his thinking is rather the exception than the rule in political propaganda—even in democratic countries. Confronted with the power and size of the parties as demonstrated in their propaganda, the individual voter cannot help feeling small and of little significance.

All this does not mean that advertising and political propaganda overtly stress the individual's insignificance. Quite the contrary; they flatter the individual by making him appear important, and by pretending that they appeal to his critical judgment, to his sense of discrimination. But these

pretenses are essentially a method to dull the individual's suspicions and to help him fool himself as to the individual character of his decision. I need scarcely point out that the propaganda of which I have been speaking is not wholly irrational, and that there are differences in the weight of rational factors in the propaganda of different parties and candidates respectively.

Other factors have added to the growing powerlessness of the individual. The economic and political scene is more complex and vaster than it used to be; the individual has less ability to look through it. The threats which he is confronted with have grown in dimensions too. A structural unemployment of many millions has increased the sense of insecurity. Although the support of the unemployed by public means has done much to counteract the results of unemployment, not only economically but also psychologically, the fact remains that for the vast majority of people the burden of being unemployed is very hard to bear psychologically and the dread of it overshadows their whole life. To have a job—regardless of what kind of a job it is—seems to many all they could want of life and something they should be grateful for. Unemployment has also increased the threat of old age. In many jobs only the young and even inexperienced person who is still adaptable is wanted; that means, those who can still be molded without difficulty into the little cogs which are required in that particular setup.

The threat of war has also added to the feeling of individual powerlessness. To be sure, there were wars in the nineteenth century too. But since the last war the possibilities of destruction have increased so tremendously—the range of people to be affected by war has grown to such an extent as to comprise everybody without any exception—that the threat of war has become a nightmare which, though it may not be conscious to many people before their nation is actually involved in the war, has overshadowed their lives and increased their feeling of fright and individual powerlessness.

The "style" of the whole period corresponds to the picture I have sketched. Vastness of cities in which the individual is lost, buildings that are as high as mountains, constant acoustic bombardment by the radio, big headlines changing three times a day and leaving one no choice to decide what is important, shows in which one hundred girls demonstrate their ability with clocklike precision to eliminate the individual and act like a powerful though smooth machine, the beating rhythm of jazz—these and

many other details are expressions of a constellation in which the individual is confronted by uncontrollable dimensions in comparison with which he is a small particle. All he can do is to fall in step like a marching soldier or a worker on the endless belt. He can act; but the sense of independence, significance, has gone.

The extent to which the average person in America is filled with the same sense of fear and insignificance seems to find a telling expression in the fact of the popularity of the Mickey Mouse pictures. There the one theme—in so many variations—is always this: something little is persecuted and endangered by something overwhelmingly strong, which threatens to kill or swallow the little thing. The little thing runs away and eventually succeeds in escaping or even in harming the enemy. People would not be ready to look continually at the many variations of this one theme unless it touched upon something very close to their own emotional life. Apparently the little thing threatened by a powerful, hostile enemy is the spectator himself; that is how *he* feels and that is the situation with which he can identify himself. But of course, unless there were a happy ending there would be no continuous attraction. As it is, the spectator lives through all his own fears and feelings of smallness and at the end gets the comforting feeling that, in spite of all, he will be saved and will even conquer the strong one. However—and this is the significant and sad part of this "happy end"—his salvation lies mostly in his ability to run away and in the unforeseen accidents which make it impossible for the monster to catch him.

The position in which the individual finds himself in our period had already been foreseen by visionary thinkers in the nineteenth century. Kierkegaard describes the helpless individual torn and tormented by doubts, overwhelmed by the feeling of aloneness and insignificance. Nietzsche visualizes the approaching nihilism which was to become manifest in Nazism and paints a picture of a "superman" as the negation of the insignificant, directionless individual he saw in reality. The theme of the powerlessness of man has found a most precise expression in Franz Kafka's work. In his Castle he describes the man who wants to get in touch with the mysterious inhabitants of a castle, who are supposed to tell him what to do and show him his place in the world. All his life consists in his frantic effort to get into touch with them, but he never succeeds and is left alone with a sense of utter futility and helplessness.

The feeling of isolation and powerlessness has been beautifully expressed in the following passage by Julian Green: “I knew that we counted little in comparison with the universe, I knew that we were nothing; but to be so immeasurably nothing seems in some way both to overwhelm and at the same time to reassure. Those figures, those dimensions beyond the range of human thought, are utterly overpowering. Is there anything whatsoever to which we can cling? Amid that chaos of illusions into which we are cast headlong, there is one thing that stands out as true, and that is—love. All the rest is nothingness, an empty void. We peer down into a huge dark abyss. And we are afraid.”[54]

However, this feeling of individual isolation and powerlessness as it has been expressed by these writers and as it is felt by many so-called neurotic people, is nothing the average normal person is aware of. It is too frightening for that. It is covered over by the daily routine of his activities, by the assurance and approval he finds in his private or social relations, by success in business, by any number of distractions, by “having fun,” “making contacts,” “going places.” But whistling in the dark does not bring light. Aloneness, fear, and bewilderment remain; people cannot stand it forever. They cannot go on bearing the burden of “freedom from”; they must try to escape from freedom altogether unless they can progress from negative to positive freedom. The principal social avenues of escape in our time are the submission to a leader, as has happened in Fascist countries, and the compulsive conforming as is prevalent in our own democracy. Before we come to describe these two socially patterned ways of escape, I must ask the reader to follow me into the discussion of the intricacies of these psychological mechanisms of escape. We have dealt with some of these mechanisms already in the previous chapters; but in order to understand fully the psychological significance of Fascism and the automatization of man in modern democracy, it is necessary to understand the psychological phenomena not only in a general way but in the very detail and concreteness of their operation. This may appear to be a detour; but actually it is a necessary part of our whole discussion. Just as one cannot properly understand psychological problems without their social and cultural background, neither can one understand social phenomena without the knowledge of the underlying psychological mechanisms. The following chapter attempts to analyze these mechanisms, to reveal what is going on in the individual, and to show how, in our effort to escape from aloneness and

powerlessness, we are ready to get rid of our individual self either by submission to new forms of authority or by a compulsive conforming to accepted patterns.

V MECHANISMS OF ESCAPE

We have brought our discussion up to the present period and would now proceed to discuss the psychological significance of Fascism and the meaning of freedom in the authoritarian systems and in our own democracy. However, since the validity of our whole argument depends on the validity of our psychological premises, it seems desirable to interrupt the general trend of thought and devote a chapter to a more detailed and concrete discussion of those psychological mechanisms which we have already touched upon and which we are later going to discuss. These premises require a detailed discussion because they are based on concepts which deal with unconscious forces and the ways in which they find expression in rationalizations and character traits, concepts which for many readers will seem, if not foreign, at least to warrant elaboration.

In this chapter I intentionally refer to individual psychology and to observations that have been made in the minute studies of individuals by the psychoanalytic procedure. Although psychoanalysis does not live up to the ideal which for many years was the ideal of academic psychology, that is, the approximation of the experimental methods of the natural sciences, it is nevertheless a thoroughly empirical method, based on the painstaking observation of an individual's uncensored thoughts, dreams, and phantasies. Only a psychology which utilizes the concept of unconscious forces can penetrate the confusing rationalizations we are confronted with in analyzing either an individual or a culture. A great number of apparently insoluble problems disappear at once if we decide to give up the notion that the motives by which people *believe* themselves to be motivated are necessarily the ones which actually drive them to act, feel, and think as they do.

Many a reader will raise the question whether findings won by the observation of individuals can be applied to the psychological understanding of groups. Our answer to this question is an emphatic affirmation. Any group consists of individuals and nothing but individuals, and psychological mechanisms which we find operating in a group can therefore only be mechanisms that operate in individuals. In studying

individual psychology as a basis for the understanding of social psychology, we do something which might be compared with studying an object under the microscope. This enables us to discover the very details of psychological mechanisms which we find operating on a large scale in the social process. If our analysis of socio-psychological phenomena is not based on the detailed study of individual behavior, it lacks empirical character and, therefore, validity.

But even admitted that the study of individual behavior has such significance, one might question whether the study of individuals who are commonly labeled as neurotics can be of any use in considering the problems of social psychology. Again, we believe that this question must be answered in the affirmative. The phenomena which we observe in the neurotic person are in principle not different from those we find in the normal. They are only more accentuated, clear-cut, and frequently more accessible to the awareness of the neurotic person than they are in the normal who is not aware of any problem which warrants study.

In order to make this clearer, a brief discussion of the terms *neurotic* and *normal*, or *healthy,* seems to be useful.

The term *normal* or *healthy* can be defined in two ways. Firstly, from the standpoint of a functioning society, one can call a person normal or healthy if he is able to fulfill the social role he is to take in that given society More concretely, this means that he is able to work in the fashion which is required in that particular society, and furthermore that he is able to participate in the reproduction of society, that is, that he can raise a family. Secondly, from the standpoint of the individual, we look upon health or normalcy as the optimum of growth and happiness of the individual.

If the structure of a given society were such that it offered the optimum possibility for individual happiness, both viewpoints would coincide. However, this is not the case in most societies we know, including our own. Although they differ in the degree to which they promote the aims of individual growth, there is a discrepancy between the aims of the smooth functioning of society and of the full development of the individual. This fact makes it imperative to differentiate sharply between the two concepts of health. The one is governed by social necessities, the other by values and norms concerning the aim of individual existence.

Unfortunately, this differentiation is often neglected. Most psychiatrists take the structure of their own society so much for granted that

to them the person who is not well adapted assumes the stigma of being less valuable. On the other hand, the well-adapted person is supposed to be the more valuable person in terms of a scale of human values. If we differentiate the two concepts of normal and neurotic, we come to the following conclusion: the person who is normal in terms of being well adapted is often less healthy than the neurotic person in terms of human values. Often he is well adapted only at the expense of having given up his self in order to become more or less the person he believes he is expected to be. All genuine individuality and spontaneity may have been lost. On the other hand, the neurotic person can be characterized as somebody who was not ready to surrender completely in the battle for his self. To be sure, his attempt to save his individual self was not successful, and instead of expressing his self productively he sought salvation through neurotic symptoms and by withdrawing into a phantasy life. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of human values, he is less crippled than the kind of normal person who has lost his individuality altogether. Needless to say there are persons who are not neurotic and yet have not drowned their individuality in the process of adaptation. But the stigma attached to the neurotic person seems to us to be unfounded and justified only if we think of neurotic in terms of social efficiency. As for a whole society, the term *neurotic* cannot be applied in this latter sense, since a society could not exist if its members did not function socially. From a standpoint of human values, however, a society could be called neurotic in the sense that its members are crippled in the growth of their personality. Since the term *neurotic is so* often used to denote lack of social functioning, we would prefer not to speak of a society in terms of its being neurotic, but rather in terms of its being adverse to human happiness and self-realization.

The mechanisms we shall discuss in this chapter are mechanisms of escape, which result from the insecurity of the isolated individual.

Once the primary bonds which gave security to the individual are severed, once the individual faces the world outside of himself as a completely separate entity, two courses are open to him since he has to overcome the unbearable state of powerlessness and aloneness. By one course he can progress to “positive freedom”; he can relate himself spontaneously to the world in love and work, in the genuine expression of his emotional, sensuous, and intellectual capacities; he can thus become one again with man, nature, and himself, without giving up the independence

and integrity of his individual self. The other course open to him is to fall back, to give up his freedom, and to try to overcome his aloneness by eliminating the gap that has arisen between his individual self and the world. This second course never reunites him with the world in the way he was related to it before he merged as an "individual," for the fact of his separateness cannot be reversed; it is an escape from an unbearable situation which would make life impossible if it were prolonged. This course of escape, therefore, is characterized by its compulsive character, like every escape from threatening panic; it is also characterized by the more or less complete surrender of individuality and the integrity of the self. Thus it is not a solution which leads to happiness and positive freedom; it is, in principle, a solution which is to be found in all neurotic phenomena. It assuages an unbearable anxiety and makes life possible by avoiding panic; yet it does not solve the underlying problem and is paid for by a kind of life that often consists only of automatic or compulsive activities.

Some of these mechanisms of escape are of relatively small social import; they are to be found in any marked degree only in individuals with severe mental and emotional disturbances. In this chapter I shall discuss only those mechanisms which are culturally significant and the understanding of which is a necessary premise for the psychological analysis of the social phenomena with which we shall deal in the following chapters: the Fascist system, on one hand, modern democracy, on the other.[55]

1. Authoritarianism

The first mechanism to escape from freedom I am going to deal with is the tendency to give up the independence of one's own individual self and to fuse one's self with somebody or something outside of oneself in order to acquire the strength which the individual self is lacking. Or, to put it in different words, to seek for new, "secondary bonds" as a substitute for the primary bonds which have been lost.

The more distinct forms of this mechanism are to be found in the striving for submission and domination, or, as we would rather put it, in the masochistic and sadistic strivings as they exist in varying degrees in normal and neurotic persons respectively. We shall first describe these tendencies

and then try to show that both of them are an escape from an unbearable aloneness.

The most frequent forms in which masochistic strivings appear are feelings of inferiority, powerlessness, individual insignificance. The analysis of persons who are obsessed by these feelings show that, while they consciously complain about these feelings and want to get rid of them, unconsciously some power within themselves drives them to feel inferior or insignificant. Their feelings are more than realizations of actual shortcomings and weaknesses (although they are usually rationalized as though they were); these persons show a tendency to belittle themselves, to make themselves weak, and not to master things. Quite regularly these people show a marked dependence on powers outside of themselves, on other people, or institutions, or nature. They tend not to assert themselves, not to do what they want, but to submit to the factual or alleged orders of these outside forces. Often they are quite incapable of experiencing the feeling “I want” or “I am.” Life, as a whole, is felt by them as something overwhelmingly powerful, which they cannot master or control.

In the more extreme cases—and there are many—one finds besides these tendencies to belittle oneself and to submit to outside forces a tendency to hurt oneself and to make oneself suffer.

This tendency can assume various forms. We find that there are people who indulge in self-accusation and self-criticism which even their worst enemies would scarcely bring against them. There are others, such as certain compulsive neurotics, who tend to torture themselves with compulsory rites and thoughts. In a certain type of neurotic personality, we find a tendency to become physically ill, and to wait, consciously or unconsciously, for an illness as if it were a gift of the gods. Often they incur accidents which would not have happened had there not been at work an unconscious tendency to incur them. These tendencies directed against themselves are often revealed in still less overt or dramatic forms. For instance, there are persons who are incapable of answering questions in an examination when the answers are very well known to them at the time of the examination and even afterwards. There are others who say things which antagonize those whom they love or on whom they are dependent, although actually they feel friendly toward them and did not intend to say those things. With such people, it almost seems as if they were following

advice given them by an enemy to behave in such a way as to be most detrimental to themselves.

The masochistic trends are often felt as plainly pathological or irrational. More frequently they are rationalized. Masochistic dependency is conceived as love or loyalty, inferiority feelings as an adequate expression of actual shortcomings, and one's suffering as being entirely due to unchangeable circumstances.

Besides these masochistic trends, the very opposite of them, namely, *sadistic* tendencies, are regularly to be found in the same kind of characters. They vary in strength, are more or less conscious, yet they are never missing. We find three kinds of sadistic tendencies, more or less closely knit together. One is to make others dependent on oneself and to have absolute and unrestricted power over them, so as to make of them nothing but instruments, "clay in the potter's hand." Another consists of the impulse not only to rule over others in this absolute fashion, but to exploit them, to use them, to steal from them, to disembowel them, and, so to speak, to incorporate anything eatable in them. This desire can refer to material things as well as to immaterial ones, such as the emotional or intellectual qualities a person has to offer. A third kind of sadistic tendency is the wish to make others suffer or to see them suffer. This suffering can be physical, but more often it is mental suffering. Its aim is to hurt actively, to humiliate, embarrass others, or to see them in embarrassing and humiliating situations.

Sadistic tendencies for obvious reasons are usually less conscious and more rationalized than the socially more harmless masochistic trends. Often they are entirely covered up by reaction formations of over-goodness or over-concern for others. Some of the most frequent rationalizations are the following: "I rule over you because I know what is best for you, and in your own interest you should follow me without opposition." Or, "I am so wonderful and unique, that I have a right to expect that other people become dependent on me." Another rationalization which often covers the exploiting tendencies is: "I have done so much for you, and now I am entitled to take from you what. I want." The more aggressive kind of sadistic impulse finds its most frequent rationalization in two forms: "I have been hurt by others and my wish to hurt them is nothing but retaliation," or, "By striking first I am defending myself or my friends against the danger of being hurt."

There is one factor in the relationship of the sadistic person to the object of his sadism which is often neglected and therefore deserves especial emphasis here: his dependence on the object of his sadism.

While the masochistic person's dependence is obvious, our expectation with regard to the sadistic person is just the reverse: he seems so strong and domineering, and the object of his sadism so weak and submissive, that it is difficult to think of the strong one as being dependent on the one over whom he rules. And yet close analysis shows that this is true. The sadist needs the person over whom he rules, he needs him very badly, since his own feeling of strength is rooted in the fact that he is the master over someone. This dependence may be entirely unconscious. Thus, for example, a man may treat his wife very sadistically and tell her repeatedly that she can leave the house any day and that he would be only too glad if she did. Often she will be so crushed that she will not dare to make an attempt to leave, and therefore they both will continue to believe that what he says is true. But if she musters up enough courage to declare that she will leave him, something quite unexpected to both of them may happen: he will become desperate, break down, and beg her not to leave him; he will say he cannot live without her, and will declare how much he loves her and so on. Usually, being afraid of asserting herself anyhow, she will be prone to believe him, change her decision and stay. At this point the play starts again. He resumes his old behavior, she finds it increasingly difficult to stay with him, explodes again, he breaks down again, she stays, and so on and on many times.

There are thousands upon thousands of marriages and other personal relationships in which this cycle is repeated again and again, and the magic circle is never broken through. Did he lie when he said he loved her so much that he could not live without her? As far as love is concerned, it all depends on what one means by love. As far as his assertion goes that he could not live without her, it is—of course not taking it literally—perfectly true. He cannot live without her—or at least without someone else whom he feels to be the helpless instrument in his hands. While in such a case feelings of love appear only when the relationship threatens to be dissolved, in other cases the sadistic person quite manifestly "loves" those over whom he feels power. Whether it is his wife, his child, an assistant, a waiter, or a beggar on the street, there is a feeling of "love" and even gratitude for those objects of his domination. He may think that he wishes to dominate their

lives because he loves them so much. *He actually "loves" them because he dominates them.* He bribes them with material things, with praise, assurances of love, the display of wit and brilliance, or by showing concern. He may give them everything—everything except one thing: the right to be free and independent. This constellation is often to be found particularly in the relationship of parents and children. There, the attitude of domination—and ownership—is often covered by what seems to be the "natural" concern or feeling of protectiveness for a child. The child is put into a golden cage, it can have everything provided it does not want to leave the cage. The result of this is often a profound fear of love on the part of the child when he grows up, as "love" to him implies being caught and blocked in his own quest for freedom.

Sadism to many observers seemed less of a puzzle than masochism. That one wished to hurt others or to dominate them seemed, though not necessarily "good," quite natural. Hobbes assumed as a "general inclination of all mankind" the existence of "a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in Death."[56] For him the wish for power has no diabolical quality but is a perfectly rational result of man's desire for pleasure and security. From Hobbes to Hitler, who explains the wish for domination as the logical result of the biologically conditioned struggle for survival of the fittest, the lust for power has been explained as a part of human nature which does not warrant any explanation beyond the obvious. Masochistic strivings, however, tendencies directed against one's own self, seem to be a riddle. How should one understand the fact that people not only want to belittle and weaken and hurt themselves, but even enjoy doing so? Does not the phenomenon of masochism contradict our whole picture of the human psyche as directed toward pleasure and self-preservation? How can one explain that some men are attracted by and tend to incur what we all seem to go to such length to avoid: pain and suffering?

There is a phenomenon, however, which proves that suffering and weakness *can* be the aim of human striving: the *masochistic perversion.* Here we find that people quite consciously want to suffer in one way or another and enjoy it. In the masochistic perversion, a person feels sexual excitement when experiencing pain inflicted upon him by another person. But this is not the only form of masochistic perversion. Frequently it is not the actual suffering of pain that is sought for, but the excitement and satisfaction aroused by being physically bound, made helpless and weak.

Often all that is wanted in the masochistic perversion is to be made weak "morally," by being treated or spoken to like a little child, or by being scolded or humiliated in different ways. In the sadistic perversion, we find the satisfaction derived from corresponding devices, that is, from hurting other persons physically, from tying them with ropes or chains, or from humiliating them by actions or words.

The masochistic perversion with its conscious and intentional enjoyment of pain or humiliation caught the eye of psychologists and writers earlier than the masochistic character (or moral masochism). More and more, however, one recognized how closely the masochistic tendencies of the kind we described first are akin to the sexual perversion, and that both types of masochism are essentially one and the same phenomenon.

Certain psychologists assumed that since there are people who want to submit and to suffer, there must be an "instinct" which has this very aim. Sociologists, like Vierkandt, came to the same conclusion. The first one to attempt a more thorough theoretical explanation was Freud. He originally thought that sado-masochism was essentially a sexual phenomenon. Observing sado-masochistic practices in little children, he assumed that sado-masochism was a "partial drive" which regularly appears in the development of the sexual instinct. He believed that sado-masochistic tendencies in adults are due to a fixation of a person's psychosexual development on an early level or to a later regression to it. Later on Freud became increasingly aware of the importance of those phenomena which he called moral masochism, a tendency to suffer not physically, but mentally. He stressed also the fact that masochistic and sadistic tendencies were always to be found together in spite of their seeming contradiction. However, he changed his theoretical explanation of masochistic phenomena. Assuming that there is a biologically given tendency to destroy which can be directed either against others or against oneself, Freud suggested that masochism is essentially the product of this so-called death-instinct. He further suggested that this death-instinct, which we cannot observe directly, amalgamates itself with the sexual instinct and in the amalgamation appears as masochism if directed against one's own person, and as sadism if directed against others. He assumed that this very mixture with the sexual instinct protects man from the dangerous effect the unmixed death-instinct would have. In short, according to Freud man has only the choice of either destroying himself or destroying others, if he fails to

amalgamate destructiveness with sex. This theory is basically different from Freud's original assumption about sado-masochism. There, sado-masochism was essentially a sexual phenomenon, but in the newer theory it is essentially a nonsexual phenomenon, the sexual factor in it being only due to the amalgamation of the death-instinct with the sexual instinct.

Although Freud has for many years paid little attention to the phenomenon of nonsexual aggression, Alfred Adler has put the tendencies we are discussing here in the center of his system. But he deals with them not as sado-masochism, but as "inferiority feelings" and the "wish for power." Adler sees only the rational side of these phenomena. While we are speaking of an irrational tendency to belittle oneself and make oneself small, he thinks of inferiority feelings as adequate reaction to actual inferiorities, such as organic inferiorities or the general helplessness of a child. And while we think of the wish for power as an expression of an irrational impulse to rule over others, Adler looks at it entirely from the rational side and speaks of the wish for power as an adequate reaction which has the function of protecting a person against the dangers springing from his insecurity and inferiority. Adler, here, as always, cannot see beyond purposeful and rational determinations of human behavior; and though he has contributed valuable insights into the intricacies of motivation, he remains always on the surface and never descends into the abyss of irrational impulses as Freud has done.

In psychoanalytic literature a viewpoint different from Freud's has been presented by Wilhelm Reich,[57] Karen Horney,[58] and myself.[59]

Although Reich's views are based on the original concept of Freud's libido theory, he points out that the masochistic person ultimately seeks pleasure and that the pain incurred is a by-product, not an aim in itself. Horney was the first one to recognize the fundamental role of masochistic strivings in the neurotic personality, to give a full and detailed description of the masochistic character traits, and to account for them theoretically as the outcome of the whole character structure. In her writings, as well as in my own, instead of the masochistic character traits being thought of as rooted in the sexual perversion, the latter is understood to be the sexual expression of psychic tendencies that are anchored in a particular kind of character structure.

I come now to the main question: What is the root of both the masochistic perversion and masochistic character traits respectively?

Furthermore, what is the common root of both the masochistic *and* the sadistic strivings?

The direction in which the answer lies has already been suggested in the beginning of this chapter. Both the masochistic and sadistic strivings tend to help the individual to escape his unbearable feeling of aloneness and powerlessness. Psychoanalytic and other empirical observations of masochistic persons give ample evidence (which I cannot quote here without transcending the scope of this book) that they are filled with a terror of aloneness and insignificance. Frequently this feeling is not conscious; often it is covered by compensatory feelings of eminence and perfection. However, if one only penetrates deeply enough into the unconscious dynamics of such a person, one finds these feelings without fail. The individual finds himself "free" in the negative sense, that is, alone with his self and confronting an alienated, hostile world. In this situation, to quote a telling description of Dostoevski, in *The Brothers Karamazov,* he has "no more pressing need than the one to find somebody to whom he can surrender, as quickly as possible, that gift of freedom which he, the unfortunate creature, was born with." The frightened individual seeks for somebody or something to tie his self to; he cannot bear to be his own individual self any longer, and he tries frantically to get rid of it and to feel security again by the elimination of this burden: the self.

Masochism is one way toward this goal. The different forms which the masochistic strivings assume have one aim: *to get rid of the individual self, to lose oneself;* in other words, *to get rid of the burden* of *freedom.* This aim is obvious in those masochistic strivings in which the individual seeks to submit to a person or power which he feels as being overwhelmingly strong. (Incidentally, the conviction of superior strength of another person is always to be understood in relative terms. It can be based either upon the actual strength of the other person, or upon a conviction of one's own utter insignificance and powerlessness. In the latter event a mouse or a leaf can assume threatening features.) In other forms of masochistic strivings the essential aim is the same. In the masochistic feeling of smallness we find a tendency which serves to increase the original feeling of insignificance. How is this to be understood? Can we assume that by making a fear worse one is trying to remedy it? Indeed, this is what the masochistic person does. As long as I struggle between my desire to be independent and strong and my feeling of insignificance or powerlessness I am caught in a tormenting

conflict. If I succeed in reducing my individual self to nothing, if I can overcome the awareness of my separateness as an individual, I may save myself from this conflict. To feel utterly small and helpless is one way toward this aim; to be overwhelmed by pain and agony another; to be overcome by the effects of intoxication still another. The phantasy of suicide is the last hope if all other means have not succeeded in bringing relief from the burden of aloneness.

Under certain conditions these masochistic strivings are relatively successful. If the individual finds cultural patterns that satisfy these masochistic strivings (like the submission under the "leader" in Fascist ideology), he gains some security by finding himself united with millions of others who share these feelings. Yet even in these cases, the masochistic "solution" is no more of a solution than neurotic manifestations ever are: the individual succeeds in eliminating the conspicuous suffering but not in removing the underlying conflict and the silent unhappiness. When the masochistic striving does not find a cultural pattern or when it quantitatively exceeds the average amount of masochism in the individual's social group, the masochistic solution does not even solve anything in relative terms. It springs from an unbearable situation, tends to overcome it, and leaves the individual caught in new suffering. If human behavior were always rational and purposeful, masochism would be as inexplicable as neurotic manifestations in general are. This, however, is what the study of emotional and mental disturbances has taught us: that human behavior can be motivated by strivings which are caused by anxiety or some other unbearable state of mind, that these strivings tend to overcome this emotional state and yet merely cover up its most visible manifestations, or not even these. Neurotic manifestations resemble the irrational behavior in a panic. Thus a man, trapped in a fire, stands at the window of his room and shouts for help, forgetting entirely that no one can hear him and that he could still escape by the staircase which will also be aflame in a few minutes. He shouts because he wants to be saved, and for the moment this behavior appears to be a step on the way to being saved—and yet it will end in complete catastrophe. In the same way the masochistic strivings are caused by the desire to get rid of the individual self with all its shortcomings, conflicts, risks, doubts, and unbearable aloneness, but they only succeed in removing the most noticeable pain or they even lead to greater suffering. The irrationality of masochism, as of all other neurotic

manifestations, consists in the ultimate futility of the means adopted to solve an untenable emotional situation.

These considerations refer to an important difference between neurotic and rational activity. In the latter the result corresponds to the *motivation* of an activity—one acts in order to attain a certain result. In neurotic strivings one acts from a compulsion which has essentially a negative character: to escape an unbearable situation. The strivings tend in a direction which only fictitiously is a solution. Actually the result is contradictory to what the person wants to attain; the compulsion to get rid of an unbearable feeling was so strong that the person was unable to choose a line of action that could be a solution in any other but a fictitious sense.

The implication of this for masochism is that the individual is driven by an unbearable feeling of aloneness and insignificance. He then attempts to overcome it by getting rid of his self (as a psychological, not as a physiological entity); his way to achieve this is to belittle himself, to suffer, to make himself utterly insignificant. But pain and suffering are not what he wants; pain and suffering are the price he pays for an aim which he compulsively tries to attain. The price is dear. He has to pay more and more and, like a peon, he only gets into greater debt without ever getting what he has paid for: inner peace and tranquility.

I have spoken of the masochistic perversion because it proves beyond doubt that suffering can be something sought for. However, in the masochistic perversion as little as in moral masochism suffering is not the real aim; in both cases it is the means to an aim: forgetting one’s self. The difference between the perversion and masochistic character traits lies essentially in the following: In the perversion the trend to get rid of one’s self is expressed through the medium of the body and linked up with sexual feelings. While in moral masochism, the masochistic trends get hold of the whole person and tend to destroy all the aims which the ego consciously tries to achieve, in the perversion the masochistic strivings are more or less restricted to the physical realm; moreover by their amalgamation with sex they participate in the release of tension occurring in the sexual sphere and thus find some direct release.

The annihilation of the individual self and the attempt to overcome thereby the unbearable feeling of powerlessness are only one side of the masochistic strivings. The other side is the attempt to become a part of a bigger and more powerful whole outside of oneself, to submerge and

participate in it. This power can be a person, an institution, God, the nation, conscience, or a psychic compulsion. By becoming part of a power which is felt as unshakably strong, eternal, and glamorous, one participates in its strength and glory. One surrenders one's own self and renounces all strength and pride connected with it, one loses one's integrity as an individual and surrenders freedom; but one gains a new security and a new pride in the participation in the power in which one submerges. One gains also security against the torture of doubt. The masochistic person, whether his master is an authority outside of himself or whether he has internalized the master as conscience or a psychic compulsion, is saved from making decisions, saved from the final responsibility for the fate of his self, and thereby saved from the doubt of what decision to make. He is also saved from the doubt of what the meaning of his life is or who "he" is. These questions are answered by the relationship to the power to which he has attached himself. The meaning of his life and the identity of his self are determined by the greater whole into which the self has submerged.

The masochistic bonds are fundamentally different from the primary bonds. The latter are those that exist before the process of individuation has reached its completion. The individual is still part of "his" natural and social world, he has not yet completely emerged from his surroundings. The primary bonds give him genuine security and the knowledge of where he belongs. The masochistic bonds are escape. The individual self has emerged, but it is unable to realize its freedom; it is overwhelmed by anxiety, doubt, and a feeling of powerlessness. The self attempts to find security in "secondary bonds," as we might call the masochistic bonds, but this attempt can never be successful. The emergence of the individual self cannot be reversed; consciously the individual can feel secure and as if he "belonged," but basically he remains a powerless atom who suffers under the submergence of his self. He and the power to which he clings never become one, a basic antagonism remains and with it an impulse, even if it is not conscious at all, to overcome the masochistic dependence and to become free.

What is the essence of the sadistic drives? Again, the wish to inflict pain on others is not the essence. All the different forms of sadism which we can observe go back to one essential impulse, namely, to have complete mastery over another person, to make of him a helpless object of our will, to become the absolute ruler over him, to become his God, to do with him

as one pleases. To humiliate him, to enslave him, are means to this end and the most radical aim is to make him suffer, since there is no greater power over another person than that of inflicting pain on him, to force him to undergo suffering without his being able to defend himself. The pleasure in the complete domination over another person (or other animate objects) is the very essence of the sadistic drive.[60]

It seems that this tendency to make oneself the absolute master over another person is the opposite of the masochistic tendency, and it is puzzling that these two tendencies should be so closely knitted together. No doubt with regard to its practical consequences the wish to be dependent or to suffer is the opposite of the wish to dominate and to make others suffer. Psychologically, however, both tendencies are the outcomes of one basic need, springing from the inability to bear the isolation and weakness of one's own self. I suggest calling the aim which is at the basis of both sadism and masochism: symbiosis. Symbiosis, in this psychological sense, means the union of one individual self with another self (or any other power outside of the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them completely dependent on each other. The sadistic person needs his object just as much as the masochistic needs his. Only instead of seeking security by being swallowed, he gains it by swallowing somebody else. In both cases the integrity of the individual self is lost. In one case I dissolve myself in an outside power; I lose myself. In the other case I enlarge myself by making another being part of myself and thereby I gain the strength I lack as an independent self. It is always the inability to stand the aloneness of one's individual self that leads to the drive to enter into a symbiotic relationship with someone else. It is evident from this why masochistic and sadistic trends are always blended with each other. Although on the surface they seem contradictions, they are essentially rooted in the same basic need. People are not sadistic or masochistic, but there is a constant oscillation between the active and the passive side of the symbiotic complex, so that it is often difficult to determine which side of it is operating at a given moment. In both cases individuality and freedom are lost.

If we think of sadism, we usually think of the destructiveness and hostility which is so blatantly connected with it. To be sure, a greater or lesser amount of destructiveness is always to be found linked up with sadistic tendencies. But this is also true of masochism. Every analysis of

masochistic traits shows this hostility The main difference seems to be that in sadism the hostility is usually more conscious and directly expressed in action, while in masochism the hostility is mostly unconscious and finds an indirect expression. I shall try to show later on that destructiveness is the result of the thwarting of the individual's sensuous, emotional, and intellectual expansiveness; it is therefore to be expected as an outcome of the same conditions that make for the symbiotic need. The point I wish to emphasize here is that sadism is not identical with destructiveness, although it is to a great extent blended with it. The destructive person wants to destroy the object, that is, to do away with it and to get rid of it. The sadist wants to dominate his object and therefore suffers a loss if his object disappears.

Sadism, as we have used the word, can also be relatively free from destructiveness and blended with a friendly attitude towards its object. This kind of "loving" sadism has found classical expression in Balzac's Lost Illusions, a description which also conveys the particular quality of what we mean by the need for symbiosis. In this passage Balzac describes the relationship between young Lucien and the Bagno prisoner who poses as an Abbé. Shortly after he makes the acquaintance of the young man who has just tried to commit suicide the Abbé says: "… This young man has nothing in common with the poet who died just now. I have picked you up, I have given life to you, and you belong to me as the creature belongs to the creator, as—in the Orient's fairy tales—the Ifrit belongs to the spirit, as the body belongs to the soul. With powerful hands I will keep you straight on the road to power; I promise you, nevertheless, a life of pleasures, of honors, of everlasting feasts. You will never lack money, you will sparkle, you will be brilliant; whereas I, stooped down in the filth of promoting, shall secure the brilliant edifice of your success. I love power for the sake of power! I shall always enjoy *your* pleasures although I shall have to renounce them. Shortly: I shall be one and the same person with you. … I will love my creature, I will mold him, will shape him to my services, in order to love him as a father loves his child. I shall drive at your side in your Tilbury, my dear boy I shall delight in your successes with women. I shall say: I am this handsome young man. I have created this Marquis de Rubempré and have placed him among the aristocracy; his success is my product. He is silent and he talks with my voice, he follows my advice in everything."

Frequently, and not only in the popular usage, sadomasochism is confounded with love. Masochistic phenomena, especially, are looked upon as expressions of love. An attitude of complete self-denial for the sake of another person and the surrender of one's own rights and claims to another person have been praised as examples of "great love." It seems that there is no better proof for "love" than sacrifice and the readiness to give oneself up for the sake of the beloved person. Actually, in these cases, "love" is essentially a masochistic yearning and rooted in the symbiotic need of the person involved. If we mean by love the passionate affirmation and active relatedness to the essence of a particular person, if we mean by it the union with another person on the basis of the independence and integrity of the two persons involved, then masochism and love are opposites. Love is based on equality and freedom. If it is based on subordination and loss of integrity of one partner, it is masochistic dependence, regardless of how the relationship is rationalized. Sadism also appears frequently under the disguise of love. To rule over another person, if one can claim that to rule him is for that person's own sake, frequently appears as an expression of love, but the essential factor is the enjoyment of domination.

At this point a question will have arisen in the mind of many a reader: Is not sadism, as we have described it here, identical with the craving for power? The answer to this question is that although the more destructive forms of sadism, in which the aim is to hurt and torture another person, are not identical with the wish for power, the latter is the most significant expression of sadism. The problem has gained added significance in the present day. Since Hobbes, one has seen in power the basic motive of human behavior; the following centuries, however, gave increased weight to legal and moral factors which tended to curb power. With the rise of Fascism, the lust for power and the conviction of its right has reached new heights. Millions are impressed by the victories of power and take it for the sign of strength. To be sure, power over people is an expression of superior strength in a purely material sense. If I have the power over another person to kill him, I am "stronger" than he is. But in a psychological sense, *the lust for power is not rooted in strength but in weakness.* It is the expression of the inability of the individual self to stand alone and live. It is the desperate attempt to gain secondary strength where genuine strength is lacking.

The word *power* has a twofold meaning. One is the possession of power *over* somebody, the ability to dominate him; the other meaning is the

possession of power to do something, to be able, to be potent. The latter meaning has nothing to do with domination; it expresses mastery in the sense of ability. If we speak of powerlessness we have this meaning in mind; we do not think of a person who is not able to dominate others, but of a person who is not able to do what he wants. Thus power can mean one of two things, *domination* or *potency.* Far from being identical, these two qualities are mutually exclusive. Impotence, using the term not only with regard to the sexual sphere but to all spheres of human potentialities, results in the sadistic striving for domination; to the extent to which an individual is potent, that is, able to realize his potentialities on the basis of freedom and integrity of his self, he does not need to dominate and is lacking the lust for power. Power, in the sense of domination, is the perversion of potency, just as sexual sadism is the perversion of sexual love.

Sadistic and masochistic traits are probably to be found in everybody. At one extreme there are individuals whose whole personality is dominated by these traits, and at the other there are those for whom these sado-masochistic traits are not characteristic. Only in discussing the former can we speak of a sadomasochistic character. The term *character* is used here in the dynamic sense in which Freud speaks of character. In this sense it refers not to the sum total of behavior patterns characteristic for one person, but to the dominant drives that motivate behavior. Since Freud assumed that the basic motivating forces are sexual ones, he arrived at concepts like “oral,” “anal,” or “genital” characters. If one does not share this assumption, one is forced to devise different character types. But the dynamic concept remains the same. The driving forces are not necessarily conscious as such to a person whose character is dominated by them. A person can be entirely dominated by his sadistic strivings and consciously believe that he is motivated only by his sense of duty. He may not even commit any overt sadistic acts but suppress his sadistic drives sufficiently to make him appear on the surface as a person who is not sadistic. Nevertheless, any close analysis of his behavior, his phantasies, dreams, and gestures, would show the sadistic impulses operating in deeper layers of his personality.

Although the character of persons in whom sadomasochistic drives are dominant can be characterized as sadomasochistic, such persons are not necessarily neurotic. It depends to a large extent on the particular tasks people have to fulfill in their social situation and what patterns of feelings and behavior are present in their culture whether or not a particular kind of

character structure is “neurotic” or “normal.” As a matter of fact, for great parts of the lower middle class in Germany and other European countries, the sado-masochistic character is typical, and, as will be shown later, it is this kind of character structure to which Nazi ideology had its strongest appeal. Since the term *sado-masochistic* is associated with ideas of perversion and neurosis, I prefer to speak instead of the sado-masochistic character, especially when not the neurotic but the normal person is meant, of the *“authoritarian character.”* This terminology is justifiable because the sadomasochistic person is always characterized by his attitude toward authority He admires authority and tends to submit to it, but at the same time he wants to be an authority himself and have others submit to him. There is an additional reason for choosing this term. The Fascist systems call themselves authoritarian because of the dominant role of authority in their social and political structure. By the term *authoritarian character,* we imply that it represents the personality structure which is the human basis of Fascism.

Before going on with the discussion of the authoritarian character, the term *authority* needs some clarification. Authority is not a quality one person “has,” in the sense that he has property or physical qualities. Authority refers to an interpersonal relation in which one person looks upon another as somebody superior to him. But there is a fundamental difference between a kind of superiority-inferiority relation which can be called rational authority and one which may be described as inhibiting authority.

An example will show what I have in mind. The relationship between teacher and student and that between slave owner and slave are both based on the superiority of the one over the other. The interests of teacher and pupil lie in the same direction. The teacher is satisfied if he succeeds in furthering the pupil; if he has failed to do so, the failure is his and the pupil’s. The slave owner, on the other hand, wants to exploit the slave as much as possible; the more he gets out of him, the more he is satisfied. At the same time, the slave seeks to defend as best he can his claims for a minimum of happiness. These interests are definitely antagonistic, as what is of advantage to the one is detrimental to the other. The superiority has a different function in both cases: in the first, it is the condition for the helping of the person subjected to the authority; in the second, it is the condition for his exploitation.

The dynamics of authority in these two types are different too: the more the student learns, the less wide is the gap between him and the teacher. He becomes more and more like the teacher himself. In other words, the authority relationship tends to dissolve itself. But when the superiority serves as a basis for exploitation, the distance becomes intensified through its long duration.

The psychological situation is different in each of these authority situations. In the first, elements of love, admiration, or gratitude are prevalent. The authority is at the same time an example with which one wants to identify one's self partially or totally. In the second situation, resentment or hostility will arise against the exploiter, subordination to whom is against one's own interests. But often, as in the case of a slave, this hatred would only lead to conflicts which would subject the slave to suffering without a chance of winning. Therefore, the tendency will usually be to repress the feeling of hatred and sometimes even to replace it by a feeling of blind admiration. This has two functions: (1) to remove the painful and dangerous feeling of hatred, and (2) to soften the feeling of humiliation. If the person who rules over me is so wonderful or perfect, then I should not be ashamed of obeying him. I cannot be his equal because he is so much stronger, wiser, better, and so on, than I am. As a result, in the inhibiting kind of authority, the element either of hatred or of irrational overestimation and admiration of the authority will tend to increase. In the rational kind of authority, it will tend to decrease in direct proportion to the degree in which the person subjected to the authority becomes stronger and thereby more similar to the authority.

The difference between rational and inhibiting authority is only a relative one. Even in the relationship between slave and master there are elements of advantage for the slave. He gets a minimum of food and protection which at least enables him to work for his master. On the other hand, it is only in an ideal relationship between teacher and student that we find a complete lack of antagonism of interests. There are many gradations between these two extreme cases, as in the relationship of a factory worker with his boss, or a farmer's son with his father, or a hausfrau with her husband. Nevertheless, although in reality two types of authority are blended, they are essentially different, and an analysis of a concrete authority situation must always determine the specific weight of each kind of authority.

Authority does not have to be a person or institution which says: you have to do this, or you are not allowed to do that. While this kind of authority may be called external authority, authority can appear as internal authority, under the name of duty, conscience, or superego. As a matter of fact, the development of modern thinking from Protestantism to Kant's philosophy, can be characterized as the substitution of internalized authority for an external one. With the political victories of the rising middle class, external authority lost prestige and man's own conscience assumed the place which external authority once had held. This change appeared to many as the victory of freedom. To submit to orders from the outside (at least in spiritual matters) appeared to be unworthy of a free man; but the conquest of his natural inclinations, and the establishment of the domination of one part of the individual, his nature, by another, his reason, will or conscience, seemed to be the very essence of freedom. Analysis shows that conscience rules with a harshness as great as external authorities, and furthermore that frequently the contents of the orders issued by man's conscience are ultimately not governed by demands which have assumed the dignity of ethical norms. The rulership of conscience can be even harsher than that of external authorities, since the individual feels its orders to be his own; how can he rebel against himself?

In recent decades "conscience" has lost much of its significance. It seems as though neither external nor internal authorities play any prominent role in the individual's life. Everybody is completely "free," if only he does not interfere with other people's legitimate claims. But what we find is rather that instead of disappearing, authority has made itself invisible. Instead of overt authority, *"anonymous" authority* reigns. It is disguised as common sense, science, psychic health, normality, public opinion. It does not demand anything except the self-evident. It seems to use no pressure but only mild persuasion. Whether a mother says to her daughter, "I know you will not like to go out with that boy," or an advertisement suggests, "Smoke this brand of cigarettes—you will like their coolness," it is the same atmosphere of subtle suggestion which actually pervades our whole social life. Anonymous authority is more effective than overt authority, since one never suspects that there is any order which one is expected to follow In external authority it is clear that there is an order and who gives it; one can fight against the authority, and in this fight personal independence and moral courage can develop. But whereas in internalized authority the

command, though an internal one, remains visible, in anonymous authority both command and commander have become invisible. It is like being fired at by an invisible enemy. There is nobody and nothing to fight back against.

Returning now to the discussion of the authoritarian character, the most important feature to be mentioned is its attitude towards power. For the authoritarian character there exist, so to speak, two sexes: the powerful ones and the powerless ones. His love, admiration and readiness for submission are automatically aroused by power, whether of a person or of an institution. Power fascinates him not for any values for which a specific power may stand, but just because it is power. Just as his “love” is automatically aroused by power, so powerless people or institutions automatically arouse his contempt. The very sight of a powerless person makes him want to attack, dominate, humiliate him. Whereas a different kind of character is appalled by the idea of attacking one who is helpless, the authoritarian character feels the more aroused the more helpless his object has become.

There is one feature of the authoritarian character which has misled many observers: a tendency to defy authority and to resent any kind of influence from “above.” Sometimes this defiance overshadows the whole picture and the submissive tendencies are in the background. This type of person will constantly rebel against any kind of authority, even one that actually furthers his interests and has no elements of suppression. Sometimes the attitude toward authority is divided. Such persons might fight against one set of authorities, especially if they are disappointed by its lack of power, and at the same time or later on submit to another set of authorities which through greater power or greater promises seems to fulfill their masochistic longings. Finally, there is a type in which the rebellious tendencies are completely repressed and come to the surface only when conscious control is weakened; or they can be recognized ex posteriori, in the hatred that arises against an authority when its power is weakened and when it begins to totter. In persons of the first type in whom the rebellious attitude is in the center of the picture, one is easily led to believe that their character structure is just the opposite to that of the submissive masochistic type. It appears as if they are persons who oppose every authority on the basis of an extreme degree of independence. They look like persons who, on the basis of their inner strength and integrity, fight those forces that block their freedom and independence. However, the authoritarian

character's fight against authority is essentially defiance. It is an attempt to assert himself and to overcome his own feeling of powerlessness by fighting authority, although the longing for submission remains present, whether consciously or unconsciously. The authoritarian character is never a "revolutionary"; I should like to call him a "rebel." There are many individuals and political movements that are puzzling to the superficial observer because of what seems to be an inexplicable change from "radicalism" to extreme authoritarianism. Psychologically, these people are the typical "rebels."

The attitude of the authoritarian character toward life, his whole philosophy, is determined by his emotional strivings. The authoritarian character loves those conditions that limit human freedom, he loves being submitted to fate. It depends on his social position what "fate" means to him. For a soldier it may mean the will or whim of his superior, to which he gladly submits. For the small businessman the economic laws are his fate. Crisis and prosperity to him are not social phenomena which might be changed by human activity, but the expression of a higher power to which one has to submit. For those on the top of the pyramid it is basically not different. The difference lies only in the size and generality of the power to which one submits, not in the feeling of dependence as such.

Not only the forces that determine one's own life directly but also those that seem to determine life in general are felt as unchangeable fate. It is fate that there are wars and that one part of mankind has to be ruled by another. It is fate that the amount of suffering can never be less than it always has been. Fate may be rationalized philosophically as "natural law" or as "destiny of man," religiously as the "will of the Lord," ethically as "duty"—for the authoritarian character it is always a higher power outside of the individual, toward which the individual can do nothing but submit. The authoritarian character worships the past. What has been, will eternally be. To wish or to work for something that has not yet been before is crime or madness. The miracle of creation—and creation is always a miracle—is outside of his range of emotional experience.

Schleiermacher's definition of religious experience as experience of absolute dependence is the definition of the masochistic experience in general; a special role in this feeling of dependence is played by sin. The concept of original sin, which weighs upon all future generations, is characteristic of the authoritarian experience. Moral like any other kind of

human failure becomes a fate which man can never escape. Whoever has once sinned is chained eternally to his sin with iron shackles. Man's own doing becomes the power that rules over him and never lets him free. The consequences of guilt can be softened by atonement, but atonement can never do away with the guilt.[61] Isaiah's words, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," express the very opposite of authoritarian philosophy.

The feature common to all authoritarian thinking is the conviction that life is determined by forces outside of man's own self, his interest, his wishes. The only possible happiness lies in the submission to these forces. The powerlessness of man is the leitmotif of masochistic philosophy. One of the ideological fathers of Nazism, Moeller van der Bruck, expressed this feeling very clearly. He writes: "The conservative believes rather in catastrophe, in the powerlessness of man to avoid it, in its necessity, and in the terrible disappointment of the seduced optimist."[62] In Hitler's writing we shall see more illustrations of the same spirit.

The authoritarian character does not lack activity, courage, or belief. But these qualities for him mean something entirely different from what they mean for the person who does not long for submission. For the authoritarian character activity is rooted in a basic feeling of powerlessness which it tends to overcome. Activity in this sense means to act in the name of something higher than one's own self. It is possible in the name of God, the past, nature, or duty, but never in the name of the future, of the unborn, of what has no power, or of life as such. The authoritarian character wins his strength to act through his leaning on superior power. This power is never assailable or changeable. For him lack of power is always an unmistakable sign of guilt and inferiority, and if the authority in which he believes shows signs of weakness, his love and respect change into contempt and hatred. He lacks an "offensive potency" which can attack established power without first feeling subservient to another and stronger power.

The courage of the authoritarian character is essentially a courage to suffer what fate or its personal representative or "leader" may have destined him for. To suffer without complaining is his highest virtue—not the courage of trying to end suffering or at least to diminish it. Not to change fate, but to submit to it, is the heroism of the authoritarian character.

He has belief in authority as long as it is strong and commanding. His belief is rooted ultimately in his doubts and constitutes an attempt to compensate them. But he has no faith, if we mean by faith the secure confidence in the realization of what now exists only as a potentiality. Authoritarian philosophy is essentially relativistic and nihilistic, in spite of the fact that it often claims so violently to have conquered relativism and in spite of its show of activity. It is rooted in extreme desperation, in the complete lack of faith, and it leads to nihilism, to the denial of life.[63]

In authoritarian philosophy the concept of equality does not exist. The authoritarian character may sometimes use the word *equality* either conventionally or because it suits his purposes. But it has no real meaning or weight for him, since it concerns something outside the reach of his emotional experience. For him the world is composed of people with power and those without it, of superior ones and inferior ones. On the basis of his sado-masochistic strivings, he experiences only domination or submission, but never solidarity. Differences, whether of sex or race, to him are necessarily signs of superiority or inferiority. A difference which does not have this connotation is unthinkable to him.

The description of the sado-masochistic strivings and the authoritarian character refers to the more extreme forms of helplessness and the correspondingly more extreme forms of escaping it by the symbiotic relationship to the object of worship or domination.

Although these sado-masochistic strivings are common, we can consider only certain individuals and social groups as typically sado-masochistic. There is, however, a milder form of dependency which is so general in our culture that only in exceptional cases does it seem to be lacking. This dependency does not have the dangerous and passionate qualities of sadomasochism, but it is important enough not to be omitted from our discussion here.

I am referring to the kind of persons whose whole life is in a subtle way related to some power outside themselves.[64] There is nothing they do, feel, or think which is not somehow related to this power. They expect protection from “him,” wish to be taken care of by “him,” make “him” also responsible for whatever may be the outcome of their own actions. Often the fact of his dependence is something the person is not aware of at all. Even if there is a dim awareness of some dependency, the person or power on whom he is dependent often remains nebulous. There is no definite

image linked up with that power. Its essential quality is to represent a certain function, namely to protect, help, and develop the individual, to be with him and never leave him alone. The "X" which has these qualities may be called the *magic helper.* Frequently, of course, the "magic helper" is personified: he is conceived of as God, as a principle, or as real persons such as one's parent, husband, wife, or superior. It is important to recognize that when real persons assume the role of the magic helper they are endowed with magic qualities, and the significance they have results from their being the personification of the magic helper. This process of personification of the magic helper is to be observed frequently in what is called "falling in love." A person with that kind of relatedness to the magic helper seeks to find him in flesh and blood. For some reason or other—often supported by sexual desires—a certain other person assumes for him those magic qualities, and he makes that person into the being to whom and on whom his whole life becomes related and dependent. The fact that the other person frequently does the same with the first one does not alter the picture. It only helps to strengthen the impression that this relationship is one of "real love."

This need for the magic helper can be studied under experiment—like conditions in the psychoanalytic procedure. Often the person who is analyzed forms a deep attachment to the psychoanalyst and his or her whole life, all actions, thoughts, and feeling are related to the analyst. Consciously or unconsciously the analysand asks himself: would he (the analyst) be pleased with this, displeased with that, agree to this, scold me for that? In love relationships the fact that one chooses this or that person as a partner serves as a proof that this particular person is loved just because he is "he"; but in the psychoanalytic situation this illusion cannot be upheld. The most different kinds of persons develop the same feelings toward the most different kinds of psychoanalysts. The relationship looks like love; it is often accompanied by sexual desires; yet it is essentially a relationship to the personified magic helper, a role which obviously a psychoanalyst, like certain other persons who have some authority (physicians, ministers, teachers), is able to play satisfactorily for the person who is seeking the personified magic helper.

The reasons why a person is bound to a magic helper are, in principle, the same that we have found at the root of the symbiotic drives: an inability to stand alone and to fully express his own individual potentialities. In the

sado-masochistic strivings this inability leads to a tendency to get rid of one's individual self through dependency on the magic helper—in the milder form of dependency I am discussing now it only leads to a wish for guidance and protection. The intensity of the relatedness to the magic helper is in reverse proportion to the ability to express spontaneously one's own intellectual, emotional, and sensuous potentialities. In other words, one hopes to get everything one expects from life, from the magic helper, instead of by one's own actions. The more this is the case, the more is the center of life shifted from one's own person to the magic helper and his personifications. The question is then no longer how to live oneself, but how to manipulate "him" in order not to lose him and how to make him do what one wants, even to make him responsible for what one is responsible oneself.

In the more extreme cases, a person's whole life consists almost entirely in the attempt to manipulate "him"; people differ in the means which they use; for some obedience, for some "goodness," for others suffering is the main means of manipulation. We see, then, that there is no feeling, thought, or emotion that is not at least colored by the need to manipulate "him"; in other words, that no psychic act is really spontaneous or free. This dependency, springing from and at the same time leading to a blockage of spontaneity, not only gives a certain amount of security but also results in a feeling of weakness and bondage. As far as this is the case, the very person who is dependent on the magic helper also feels, although often unconsciously, enslaved by "him" and, to a greater or lesser degree, rebels against "him." This rebelliousness against the very person on whom one has put one's hopes for security and happiness, creates new conflicts. It has to be suppressed if one is not to lose "him," but the underlying antagonism constantly threatens the security sought for in the relationship.

If the magic helper is personified in an actual person, the disappointment that follows when he falls short of what one is expecting from this person—and since the expectation is an illusory one, any actual person is inevitably disappointing—in addition to the resentment resulting from one's own enslavement to that person, leads to continuous conflicts. These sometimes end only with separation, which is usually followed by the choice of another object who is expected to fulfill all hopes connected with the magic helper. If this relationship proves to be a failure too, it may be broken up again or the person involved may decide that this is just "life,"

and resign. What he does not recognize is the fact that his failure is not essentially the result of his not having chosen the right magic person; it is the direct result of having tried to obtain by the manipulation of a magic force that which only the individual can achieve himself by his own spontaneous activity.

The phenomenon of life-long dependency on an object outside of oneself has been seen by Freud. He has interpreted it as the continuation of the early, essentially sexual, bonds with the parents throughout life. As a matter of fact, the phenomenon has impressed him so much that he has asserted that the Oedipus complex is the nucleus of all neuroses, and in the successful overcoming of the Oedipus complex he has seen the main problem of normal development.

In seeing the Oedipus complex as the central phenomenon of psychology Freud has made one of the most important discoveries in psychology. But he has failed in its adequate interpretation; for although the phenomenon of sexual attraction between parents and children does exist and although conflicts arising from it sometimes constitute part of the neurotic development, neither the sexual attraction nor the resulting conflicts are the essential in the fixation of children on their parents. As long as the infant is small it is quite naturally dependent on the parents, but this dependence does not necessarily imply a restriction of the child's own spontaneity. However, when the parents, acting as the agents of society, start to suppress the child's spontaneity and independence, the growing child feels more and more unable to stand on its own feet; it therefore seeks for the magic helper and often makes the parents the personification of "him." Later on, the individual transfers these feelings to somebody else, for instance, to a teacher, a husband, or a psychoanalyst. Again, the need for being related to such a symbol of authority is not caused by the continuation of the original sexual attraction to one of the parents but by the thwarting of the child's expansiveness and spontaneity and by the consequent anxiety.

What we can observe at the kernel of every neurosis, as well as of normal development, is the struggle for freedom and independence. For many normal persons this struggle has ended in a complete giving up of their individual selves, so that they are thus well adapted and considered to be normal. The neurotic person is the one who has not given up fighting against complete submission, but who, at the same time, has remained bound to the figure of the magic helper, whatever form or shape "he" may

have assumed. His neurosis is always to be understood as an attempt, and essentially an unsuccessful one, to solve the conflict between that basic dependency and the quest for freedom.

2. Destructiveness

We have already mentioned that the sado-masochistic strivings have to be differentiated from destructiveness, although they are mostly blended with each other. Destructiveness is different since it aims not at active or passive symbiosis but at elimination of its object. But it, too, is rooted in the unbearableness of individual powerlessness and isolation. I can escape the feeling of my own powerlessness in comparison with the world outside of myself by destroying it. To be sure, if I succeed in removing it, I remain alone and isolated, but mine is a splendid isolation in which I cannot be crushed by the overwhelming power of the objects outside of myself. The destruction of the world is the last, almost desperate attempt to save myself from being crushed by it. Sadism aims at incorporation of the object; destructiveness at its removal. Sadism tends to strengthen the atomized individual by the domination over others; destructiveness by the absence of any threat from the outside.

Any observer of personal relations in our social scene cannot fail to be impressed with the amount of destructiveness to be found everywhere. For the most part it is not conscious as such but is rationalized in various ways. As a matter of fact, there is virtually nothing that is not used as a rationalization for destructiveness. Love, duty, conscience, patriotism have been and are being used as disguises to destroy others or oneself. However, we must differentiate between two different kinds of destructive tendencies. There are destructive tendencies which result from a specific situation; as reaction to attacks on one's own or others' life and integrity, or on ideas which one is identified with. This kind of destructiveness is the natural and necessary concomitant of one's affirmation of life.

The destructiveness here under discussion, however, is not this rational —or as one might call it "reactive"—hostility, but a constantly lingering tendency within a person which so to speak waits only for an opportunity to be expressed. If there is no objective "reason" for the expression of destructiveness, we call the person mentally or emotionally sick (although the person himself will usually build up some sort of a rationalization). In

most cases the destructive impulses, however, are rationalized in such a way that at least a few other people or a whole social group share in the rationalization and thus make it appear to be “realistic” to the member of such a group. But the objects of irrational destructiveness and the particular reasons for their being chosen are only of secondary importance; the destructive impulses are a passion within a person, and they always succeed in finding some object. If for any reason other persons cannot become the object of an individual’s destructiveness, his own self easily becomes the object. When this happens in a marked degree, physical illness is often the result and even suicide may be attempted.

We have assumed that destructiveness is an escape from the unbearable feeling of powerlessness, since it aims at the removal of all objects with which the individual has to compare himself. But in view of the tremendous role that destructive tendencies play in human behavior, this interpretation does not seem to be a sufficient explanation; the very conditions of isolation and powerlessness are responsible for two other sources of destructiveness: anxiety and the thwarting of life. Concerning the role of anxiety not much needs to be said. Any threat against vital (material and emotional) interests creates anxiety,[65] and destructive tendencies are the most common reaction to such anxiety. The threat can be circumscribed in a particular situation by particular persons. In such a case, the destructiveness is aroused towards these persons. It can also be a constant—though not necessarily conscious—anxiety springing from an equally constant feeling of being threatened by the world outside. This kind of constant anxiety results from the position of the isolated and powerless individual and is one other source of the reservoir of destructiveness that develops in him.

Another important outcome of the same basic situation is what I have just called the thwarting of life. The isolated and powerless individual is blocked in realizing his sensuous, emotional, and intellectual potentialities. He is lacking the inner security and spontaneity that are the conditions of such realization. This inner blockage is increased by cultural taboos on pleasure and happiness, like those that have run through the religion and mores of the middle class since the period of the Reformation. Nowadays, the external taboo has virtually vanished, but the inner blockage has remained strong in spite of the conscious approval of sensuous pleasure.

This problem of the relation between the thwarting of life and destructiveness has been touched upon by Freud, and in discussing his

theory we shall be able to express some suggestions of our own.

Freud realized that he had neglected the weight and importance of destructive impulses in his original assumption that the sexual drive and the drive for self-preservation were the two basic motivations of human behavior. Believing, later, that destructive tendencies are as important as the sexual ones, he proceeded to the assumption that there are two basic strivings to be found in man: a drive that is directed toward life and is more or less identical with sexual libido, and a death-instinct whose aim is the very destruction of life. He assumed that the latter can be blended with the sexual energy and then be directed either against one's own self or against objects outside of oneself. He furthermore assumed that the death-instinct is rooted in a biological quality inherent in all living organisms and therefore a necessary and unalterable part of life.

The assumption of the death-instinct is satisfactory inasmuch as it takes into consideration the full weight of destructive tendencies, which had been neglected in Freud's earlier theories. But it is not satisfactory inasmuch as it resorts to a biological explanation that fails to take account sufficiently of the fact that the amount of destructiveness varies enormously among individuals and social groups. If Freud's assumptions were correct, we would have to assume that the amount of destructiveness either against others or oneself is more or less constant. But what we do observe is to the contrary. Not only does the weight of destructiveness among individuals in our culture vary a great deal, but also destructiveness is of unequal weight among different social groups. Thus, for instance, the weight of destructiveness in the character of the members of the lower middle class in Europe is definitely much greater than among the working class and the upper classes. Anthropological studies have acquainted us with peoples in whom a particularly great amount of destructiveness is characteristic, whereas others show an equally marked lack of destructiveness, whether in the form of hostility against others or against oneself.

It seems that any attempt to understand the roots of destructiveness must start with the observation of these very differences and proceed to the question of what other differentiating factors can be observed and whether these factors may not account for the differences in the amount of destructiveness.

This problem offers such difficulties that it requires a detailed treatment of its own which we cannot attempt here. However, I should like

to suggest in what direction the answer seems to lie. It would seem that the amount of destructiveness to be found in individuals is proportionate to the amount to which expansiveness of life is curtailed. By this we do not refer to individual frustrations of this or that instinctive desire but to the thwarting of the whole of life, the blockage of spontaneity of the growth and expression of man's sensuous, emotional, and intellectual capacities. Life has an inner dynamism of its own; it tends to grow, to be expressed, to be lived. It seems that if this tendency is thwarted the energy directed toward life undergoes a process of decomposition and changes into energies directed toward destruction. In other words: the drive for life and the drive for destruction are not mutually independent factors but are in a reversed interdependence. The more the drive toward life is thwarted, the stronger is the drive toward destruction; the more life is realized, the less is the strength of destructiveness. *Destructiveness is the outcome of unlived life.* Those individual and social conditions that make for suppression of life produce the passion for destruction that forms, so to speak, the reservoir from which the particular hostile tendencies—either against others or against oneself—are nourished.

It goes without saying how important it is not only to realize the dynamic role of destructiveness in the social process but also to understand what the specific conditions for its intensity are. We have already noted the hostility which pervaded the middle class in the age of the Reformation and which found its expression in certain religious concepts of Protestantism, especially in its ascetic spirit, and in Calvin's picture of a merciless God to whom it had been pleasing to sentence part of mankind to eternal damnation for no fault of their own. Then, as later, the middle class expressed its hostility mainly disguised as moral indignation, which rationalized an intense envy against those who had the means to enjoy life. In our contemporary scene the destructiveness of the lower middle class has been an important factor in the rise of Nazism which appealed to these destructive strivings and used them in the battle against its enemies. The root of destructiveness in the lower middle class is easily recognizable as the one which has been assumed in this discussion: the isolation of the individual and the suppression of individual expansiveness, both of which were true to a higher degree for the lower middle class than for the classes above and below.

3. Automaton Conformity

In the mechanisms we have been discussing, the individual overcomes the feeling of insignificance in comparison with the overwhelming power of the world outside of himself either by renouncing his individual integrity, or by destroying others so that the world ceases to be threatening.

Other mechanisms of escape are the withdrawal from the world so completely that it loses its threat (the picture we find in certain psychotic states[66], and the inflation of oneself psychologically to such an extent that the world outside becomes small in comparison. Although these mechanisms of escape are important for individual psychology, they are only of minor relevance culturally I shall not, therefore, discuss them further here, but instead will turn to another mechanism of escape which is of the greatest social significance.

This particular mechanism is the solution that the majority of normal individuals find in modern society. To put it briefly, the individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be. The discrepancy between “I” and the world disappears and with it the conscious fear of aloneness and powerlessness. This mechanism can be compared with the protective coloring some animals assume. They look so similar to their surroundings that they are hardly distinguishable from them. The person who gives up his individual self and becomes an automaton, identical with millions of other automatons around him, need not feel alone and anxious any more. But the price he pays, however, is high; it is the loss of his self.

The assumption that the “normal” way of overcoming aloneness is to become an automaton contradicts one of the most widespread ideas concerning man in our culture. The majority of us are supposed to be individuals who are free to think, feel, act as they please. To be sure this is not only the general opinion on the subject of modern individualism, but also each individual sincerely believes that he is “he” and that his thoughts, feelings, wishes are “his.” Yet, although there are true individuals among us, this belief is an illusion in most cases and a dangerous one for that matter, as it blocks the removal of those conditions that are responsible for this state of affairs.

We are dealing here with one of the most fundamental problems of psychology which can most quickly be opened up by a series of questions. What is the self? What is the nature of those acts that give only the illusion of being the person's own acts? What is spontaneity? What is an original mental act? Finally, what has all this to do with freedom? In this chapter we shall try to show how feelings and thoughts can be induced from the outside and yet be subjectively experienced as one's own, and how one's own feelings and thoughts can be repressed and thus cease to be part of one's self. We shall continue the discussion of the questions raised here in the chapter on "Freedom and Democracy."

Let us start the discussion by analyzing the meaning of the experience which if put into words is, "I feel," "I think," "I will." When we say "I think," this seems to be a clear and unambiguous statement. The only question seems to be whether what I think is right or wrong, not whether or not I think it. Yet, one concrete experimental situation shows at once that the answer to this question is not necessarily what we suppose it to be. Let us attend an hypnotic experiment.[67] Here is the subject A whom the hypnotist B puts into hypnotic sleep and suggests to him that after awaking from the hypnotic sleep he will want to read a manuscript which he will believe he has brought with him, that he will seek it and not find it, that he will then believe that another person, C, has stolen it, that he will get very angry at C. He is also told that he will forget that all this was a suggestion given him during the hypnotic sleep. It must be added that C is a person toward whom the subject has never felt any anger and according to the circumstances has no reason to feel angry; furthermore, that he actually has not brought any manuscript with him.

What happens? A awakes and, after a short conversation about some topic, says, "Incidentally, this reminds me of something I have written in my manuscript. I shall read it to you." He looks around, does not find it, and then turns to C, suggesting that he may have taken it; getting more and more excited when C repudiates the suggestion, he eventually bursts into open anger and directly accuses C of having stolen the manuscript. He goes even further. He puts forward reasons which should make it plausible that C is the thief. He has heard from others, he says, that C needs the manuscript very badly, that he had a good opportunity to take it, and so on. We hear him not only accusing C, but making up numerous "rationalizations" which

should make his accusation appear plausible. (None of these, of course, are true and A would never have thought of them before.)

Let us assume that another person enters the room at this point. He would not have any doubt that A says what he thinks and feels; the only question in his mind would be whether or not his accusation is right, that is, whether or not the contents of A's thoughts conform to the real facts. We, however, who have witnessed the whole procedure from the start, do not care to ask whether the accusation is true. We know that this is not the problem, since we are certain that what A feels and thinks now are not his thoughts and feelings but are alien elements put into his head by another person.

The conclusion to which the person entering in the middle of the experiment comes might be something like this. "Here is A, who clearly indicates that he has all these thoughts. He is the one to know best what he thinks and there is no better proof than his own statement about what he feels. There are those other persons who say that his thoughts are superimposed upon him and are alien elements which come from without. In all fairness, I cannot decide who is right; any one of them may be mistaken. Perhaps, since there are two against one, the greater chance is that the majority is right." We, however, who have witnessed the whole experiment would not be doubtful, nor would the newcomer be if he attended other hypnotic experiments. He would then see that this type of experiment can be repeated innumerable times with different persons and different contents. The hypnotist can suggest that a raw potato is a delicious pineapple, and the subject will eat the potato with all the gusto associated with eating a pineapple. Or that the subject cannot see anything, and the subject will be blind. Or again, that he thinks that the world is flat and not round, and the subject will argue heatedly that the world is flat.

What does the hypnotic—and especially the posthypnotic—experiment prove? It proves that we can have thoughts, feelings, wishes, and even sensual sensations which we subjectively feel to be ours, and yet that, although we experience these thoughts and feelings, they have been put into us from the outside, are basically alien, and are not what we think, feel, and so on.

What does the specific hypnotic experiment with which we started show? (1) The subject wills something, namely, to read his manuscript, (2) he *thinks* something, namely, that C has taken it, and (3) he *feels* something,

namely, anger against C. We have seen that all three mental acts—his will impulse, his thought, his feeling—are not his own in the sense of being the result of his own mental activity; that they have not originated in him, but are put into him from the outside and are subjectively felt as *if* they were his own. He gives expression to a number of thoughts which have not been put into him during the hypnosis, namely, those "rationalizations" by which he "explains" his assumption that C has stolen the manuscript. But nevertheless these thoughts are his own only in a formal sense. Although they appear to explain the suspicion, we know that the suspicion is there first and that the rationalizing thoughts are only invented to make the feeling plausible; they are not really explanatory but come *post factum.*

We started with the hypnotic experiment because it shows in the most unmistakable manner that, although one may be convinced of the spontaneity of one's mental acts, they actually result from the influence of a person other than oneself under the conditions of a particular situation. The phenomenon, however, is by no means to be found only in the hypnotic situation. The fact that the contents of our thinking, feeling, willing, are induced from the outside and are not genuine, exists to an extent that gives the impression that these pseudo acts are the rule, while the genuine or indigenous mental acts are the exceptions.

The pseudo character which *thinking* can assume is better known than the same phenomenon in the sphere of willing and feeling. It is best, therefore, to start with the discussion of the difference between genuine thinking and pseudo thinking. Let us suppose we are on an island where there are fishermen and summer guests from the city. We want to know what kind of weather we are to expect and ask a fisherman and two of the city people, who we know have all listened to the weather forecast on the radio. The fisherman, with his long experience and concern with this problem of weather, will start thinking, assuming that he had not as yet made up his mind before we asked him. Knowing what the direction of the wind, temperature, humidity, and so on mean as a basis for weather forecast, he will weigh the different factors according to their respective significance and come to a more or less definite judgment. He will probably remember the radio forecast and quote it as supporting or contradicting his own opinion; if it is contradictory, he may be particularly careful in weighing the reasons for his opinion; but, and this is the essential point, it is *his* opinion, the result of *his* thinking, which he tells us.

The first of the two city summer guests is a man who, when we ask him his opinion, knows that he does not understand much about the weather nor does he feel any compulsion to understand anything about it. He merely replies, “I cannot judge. All I know is that the radio forecast is thus and thus.” The other man whom we ask is of a different type. He believes that he knows a great deal about the weather, although actually he knows little about it. He is the kind of person who feels that he must be able to answer every question. He thinks for a minute and then tells us “his” opinion, which in fact is identical with the radio forecast. We ask him for his reasons and he tells us that on account of wind direction, temperature, and so on, he has come to his conclusion.

This man’s behavior as seen from the outside is the same as the fisherman’s. Yet, if we analyze it more closely, it becomes evident that he has heard the radio forecast and has accepted it. Feeling compelled, however, to have his *own* opinion about it, he forgets that he is simply repeating somebody else’s authoritative opinion, and believes that this opinion is one that he arrived at through his own thinking. He imagines that the reasons he gives us preceded his opinion, but if we examine these reasons we see that they could not possibly have led him to any conclusion about the weather if he had not formed an opinion beforehand. They are actually only pseudo reasons which have the function of making his opinion appear to be the result of his own thinking. He has the illusion of having arrived at an opinion of his own, but in reality he has merely adopted an authority’s opinion without being aware of this process. It could very well be that he is right about the weather and the fisherman wrong, but in that event it would not be “his” opinion which would be right, although the fisherman would be really mistaken in “his own” opinion.

The same phenomenon can be observed if we study people’s opinions about certain subjects, for instance, politics. Ask an average newspaper reader what he thinks about a certain political question. He will give you as “his” opinion a more or less exact account of what he has read, and yet—and this is the essential point—he believes that what he is saying is the result of his own thinking. If he lives in a small community where political opinions are handed down from father to son, “his own” opinion may be governed far more than he would for a moment believe by the lingering authority of a strict parent. Another reader’s opinion may be the outcome of a moment’s embarrassment, the fear of being thought uninformed, and

hence the “thought” is essentially a front and not the result of a natural combination of experience, desire, and knowledge. The same phenomenon is to be found in aesthetic judgments. The average person who goes to a museum and looks at a picture by a famous painter, say Rembrandt, judges it to be a beautiful and impressive picture. If we analyze his judgment, we find that he does not have any particular inner response to the picture but thinks it is beautiful because he knows that he is supposed to think it is beautiful. The same phenomenon is evident with regard to people’s judgment of music and also with regard to the act of perception itself. Many persons looking at a famous bit of scenery actually reproduce the pictures they have seen of it numerous times, say on postal cards, and while believing “they” see the scenery, they have these pictures before their eyes. Or, in experiencing an accident which occurs in their presence, they see or hear the situation in terms of the newspaper report they anticipate. As a matter of fact, for many people an experience which they have had, an artistic performance or a political meeting they have attended, becomes real to them only after they have read about it in the newspaper.

The suppression of critical thinking usually starts early. A five-year-old girl, for instance, may recognize the insincerity of her mother, either by subtly realizing that, while the mother is always talking of love and friendliness, she is actually cold and egotistical, or in a cruder way by noticing that her mother is having an affair with another man while constantly emphasizing her high moral standards. The child feels the discrepancy. Her sense of justice and truth is hurt, and yet, being dependent on the mother who would not allow any kind of criticism and, let us say, having a weak father on whom she cannot rely, the child is forced to suppress her critical insight. Very soon she will no longer notice the mother’s insincerity or unfaithfulness. She will lose the ability to think critically since it seems to be both hopeless and dangerous to keep it alive. On the other hand, the child is impressed by the pattern of having to believe that her mother is sincere and decent and that the marriage of the parents is a happy one, and she will be ready to accept this idea as if it were her own.

In all these illustrations of pseudo thinking, the problem is whether the thought is the result of one’s own thinking, that is, of one’s own activity; the problem is not whether or not the contents of the thought are right. As has been already suggested in the case of the fisherman making a weather forecast, “his” thought may even be wrong, and that of the man who only

repeats the thought put into him may be right. The pseudo thinking may also be perfectly logical and rational. Its pseudo character does not necessarily appear in illogical elements. This can be studied in rationalizations which tend to explain an action or a feeling on rational and realistic grounds, although it is actually determined by irrational and subjective factors. The rationalization may be in contradiction to facts or to the rules of logical thinking. But frequently it will be logical and rational in itself; then its irrationality lies only in the fact that it is not the real motive of the action which it pretends to have caused.

An example of irrational rationalization is brought forward in a well-known joke. A person who had borrowed a glass jar from a neighbor had broken it, and on being asked to return it, answered, “In the first place, I have already returned it to you; in the second place, I never borrowed it from you; and in the third place, it was already broken when you gave it to me.” We have an example of “rational” rationalization when a person, A, who finds himself in a situation of economic distress, asks a relative of his, B, to lend him a sum of money B declines and says that he does so because by lending money he could only support A’s inclinations to be irresponsible and to lean on others for support. Now this reasoning may be perfectly sound, but it would nevertheless be a rationalization because B had not wanted to let A have the money in any event, and although he believes himself to be motivated by concern for A’s welfare he is actually motivated by his own stinginess.

We cannot learn, therefore, whether we are dealing with a rationalization merely by determining the logicality of a person’s statement as such, but we must also take into account the psychological motivations operating in a person. The decisive point is not what is thought but how it is thought. The thought that is the result of active thinking is always new and original; original, not necessarily in the sense that others have not thought it before, but always in the sense that the person who thinks has used thinking as a tool to discover something new in the world outside or inside of himself. Rationalizations are essentially lacking this quality of discovering and uncovering; they only confirm the emotional prejudice existing in oneself. Rationalizing is not a tool for penetration of reality but a post-factum attempt to harmonize one’s own wishes with existing reality.

With feeling as with thinking, one must distinguish between a genuine feeling, which originates in ourselves, and a pseudo feeling, which is really

not our own although we believe it to be. Let us choose an example from everyday life which is typical of the pseudo character of our feelings in contact with others. We observe a man who is attending a party. He is gay, he laughs, makes friendly conversation, and all in all seems to be quite happy and contented. On taking his leave, he has a friendly smile while saying how much he enjoyed the evening. The door closes behind him—and this is the moment when we watch him carefully. A sudden change is noticed in his face. The smile has disappeared; of course, that is to be expected since he is now alone and has nothing or nobody with him to evoke a smile. But the change I am speaking of is more than just the disappearance of the smile. There appears on his face an expression of deep sadness, almost of desperation. This expression probably stays only for a few seconds, and then the face assumes the usual mask-like expression; the man gets into his car, thinks about the evening, wonders whether or not he made a good impression, and feels that he did. But was "he" happy and gay during the party? Was the brief expression of sadness and desperation we observed on his face only a momentary reaction of no great significance? It is almost impossible to decide the question without knowing more of this man. There is one incident, however, which may provide the clue for understanding what his gaiety meant.

That night he dreams that he is back with the A. E. F. in the war. He has received orders to get through the opposite lines into enemy headquarters. He dons an officer's uniform, which seems to be German, and suddenly finds himself among a group of German officers. He is surprised that the headquarters are so comfortable and that everyone is so friendly to him, but he gets more and more frightened that they will find out that he is a spy. One of the younger officers for whom he feels a particular liking approaches him and says "I know who you are. There is only one way for you to escape. Start telling jokes, laugh and make them laugh so much that they are diverted by your jokes from paying any attention to you." He is very grateful for this advice and starts making jokes and laughing. Eventually his joking increases to such an extent that the other officers get suspicious, and the greater their suspicions the more forced his jokes appear to be. At last such a feeling of terror fills him that he cannot bear to stay any longer; he suddenly jumps up from his chair and they all run after him. Then the scene changes, and he is sitting in a streetcar which stops just in

front of his house. He wears a business suit and has a feeling of relief at the thought that the war is over.

Let us assume that we are in a position to ask him the next day what occurs to him in connection with the individual elements of the dream. We record here only a few associations which are particularly significant for understanding the main point we are interested in. The German uniform reminds him that there was one guest at the party on the previous evening who spoke with a heavy German accent. He remembered having been annoyed by this man because he had not paid much attention to him, although he (our dreamer) had gone out of his way to make a good impression. While rambling along with these thoughts he recalls that for a moment at the party he had had the feeling that this man with the German accent had actually made fun of him and smiled impertinently at some statement he had made. Thinking about the comfortable room in which the headquarters were, it occurs to him that it looked like the room in which he had sat during the party last night, but that the windows looked like the windows of a room in which he had once failed in an examination. Surprised at this association, he went on to recall that before going to the party he was somewhat concerned about the impression he would make, partly because one of the guests was the brother of a girl whose interest he wanted to win, and partly because the host had much influence with a superior on whose opinion about him much depended for his professional success. Speaking about this superior he says how much he dislikes him, how humiliated he feels in having to show a friendly front toward him, and that he had felt some dislike for his host too, although he was not aware of it at all. Another of his associations is that he had told a funny incident about a bald man and then was slightly apprehensive lest he might have hurt his host who happened to be almost bald too. The streetcar struck him as strange since there did not seem to be any tracks. While talking about it, he remembers the streetcar he was riding on as a boy on his way to school, and a further detail occurs to him, namely, that he had taken the place of the streetcar driver and had thought that driving a streetcar was astonishingly little different from driving an automobile. It is evident that the streetcar stands for his own car in which he had driven home, and that his returning home reminded him of going home from school.

To anyone accustomed to understand the meaning of dreams, the implication of the dream and the accompanying associations will be clear

by now, although only part of his associations have been mentioned and practically nothing has been said about the personality structure, the past and the present situation of the man. The dream reveals what his real feeling was at the previous night's party. He was anxious, afraid of failing to make the impression he wanted to make, angry at several persons by whom he felt ridiculed and not sufficiently liked. The dream shows that his gaiety was a means of concealing his anxiety and his anger, and at the same time of pacifying those at whom he was angry. All his gaiety was a mask; it did not originate in himself, but covered what "he" really felt: fear and anger. This also made his whole position insecure, so that he felt like a spy in an enemy camp who might be found out any moment. The fleeting expression of sadness and desperation we noticed on him just when he was leaving, now finds its affirmation and also its explanation: at that moment his face expressed what "he" really felt, although it was something "he" was not really aware of feeling. In the dream, the feeling is described in a dramatic and explicit way, although it does not overtly refer to the people toward whom his feelings were directed.

This man is not neurotic, nor was he under a hypnotic spell; he is a rather normal individual with the same anxiety and need for approval as are customary in modern man. He was not aware of the fact that his gaiety was not "his," since he is so accustomed to feel what he is supposed to feel in a particular situation, that it would be the exception rather than the rule which would make him aware of anything being "strange."

What holds true of thinking and feeling holds also true of willing. Most people are convinced that as long as they are not overtly forced to do something by an outside power, their decisions are theirs, and that if they want something, it is they who want it. But this is one of the great illusions we have about ourselves. A great number of our decisions are not really our own but are suggested to us from the outside; we have succeeded in persuading ourselves that it is we who have made the decision, whereas we have actually conformed with expectations of others, driven by the fear of isolation and by more direct threats to our life, freedom, and comfort.

When children are asked whether they want to go to school every day, and their answer is, "Of course, I do," is the answer true? In many cases certainly not. The child may want to go to school quite frequently, yet very often would like to play or do something else instead. If he feels, "I want to go to school every day," he may repress his disinclination for the regularity

of schoolwork. He feels that he is expected to want to go to school every day, and this pressure is strong enough to submerge the feeling that he goes so often only because he has to. The child might feel happier if he could be aware of the fact that sometimes he wants to go and sometimes he only goes because he has to go. Yet the pressure of the sense of duty is great enough to give him the feeling that "he" wants what he is supposed to want.

It is a general assumption that most men marry voluntarily. Certainly there are those cases of men consciously marrying on the basis of a feeling of duty or obligation. There are cases in which a man marries because "he" really wants to. But there are also not a few cases in which a man (or a woman for that matter) consciously believes that he *wants* to marry a certain person while actually he finds himself caught in a sequence of events which leads to marriage and seems to block every escape. All the months leading up to his marriage he is firmly convinced that "he" wants to marry, and the first and rather belated indication that this may not be so is the fact that on the day of his marriage he suddenly gets panicky and feels an impulse to run away. If he is "sensible" this feeling lasts only for a few minutes, and he will answer the question whether it is his intention to marry with the unshakable conviction that it is.

We could go on quoting many more instances in daily life in which people seem to make decisions, seem to want something, but actually follow the internal or external pressure of "having" to want the thing they are going to do. As a matter of fact, in watching the phenomenon of human decisions, one is struck by the extent to which people are mistaken in taking as "their" decision what in effect is submission to convention, duty, or simple pressure. It almost seems that "original" decision is a comparatively rare phenomenon in a society which supposedly makes individual decision the cornerstone of its existence.

I wish to add one detailed example of a case of pseudo willing which can frequently be observed in the analysis of people who do not have any neurotic symptoms. One reason for doing so is the fact that, although this individual case has little to do with the broad cultural issues with which we are mainly concerned in this book, it gives the reader who is not familiar with the operation of unconscious forces an additional opportunity to become acquainted with this phenomenon. Moreover, this example stresses one point which, though being implicitly made already, should be brought forward explicitly: the connection of repression with the problem of pseudo

acts. Although one looks at repression mostly from the standpoint of the operation of the repressed forces in neurotic behavior, dreams, and so on, it seems important to stress the fact that every repression eliminates parts of one's real self and enforces the substitution of a pseudo feeling for the one which has been repressed.

The case I want to present now is one of a twenty-two year old medical student. He is interested in his work and gets along with people pretty normally He is not particularly unhappy, although he often feels slightly tired and has no particular zest for life. The reason why he wants to be analyzed is a theoretical one since he wants to become a psychiatrist. His only complaint is some sort of blockage in his medical work. He frequently cannot remember things he has read, gets inordinately tired during lectures, and makes a comparatively poor showing in examinations. He is puzzled by this since in other subjects he seems to have a much better memory. He has no doubts about wanting to study medicine, but often has very strong doubts as to whether he has the ability to do it.

After a few weeks of analysis he relates a dream in which he is on the top floor of a skyscraper he had built and looks out over the other buildings with a slight feeling of triumph. Suddenly the skyscraper collapses and he finds himself buried under the ruins. He is aware of efforts being made to remove the debris in order to free him, and can hear someone say that he is badly injured and that the doctor will come very soon. But he has to wait what seems to be an endless length of time before the doctor arrives. When he eventually gets there the doctor discovers that he has forgotten to bring his instruments and can therefore do nothing to help him. An intense rage wells up in him against the doctor and he suddenly finds himself standing up, realizing that he is not hurt at all. He sneers at the doctor, and at that moment he awakes.

He does not have many associations in connection with the dream, but these are some of the more relevant ones. Thinking of the skyscraper he has built, he mentions in a casual way how much he was always interested in architecture. As a child his favorite pastime for many years consisted of playing with construction blocks, and when he was seventeen, he had considered becoming an architect. When he mentioned this to his father, the latter had responded in a friendly fashion that of course he was free to choose his career, but that he (the father) was sure that the idea was a residue of his childish wishes, that he really preferred to study medicine.

The young man thought that his father was right and since then had never mentioned the problem to his father again, but had started to study medicine as a matter of course. His associations about the doctor being late and then forgetting his instruments were rather vague and scant. However, while talking about this part of the dream, it occurred to him that his analytic hour had been changed from its regular time and that while he had agreed to the change without any objection he had really felt quite angry. He can feel his anger rising now while he is talking. He accuses the analyst of being arbitrary and eventually says, “Well, after all, I cannot do what I want anyway.” He is quite surprised at his anger and at this sentence, because so far he had never felt any antagonism toward the analyst or the analytic work.

Some time afterwards he has another dream of which he only remembers a fragment: his father is wounded in an automobile accident. He himself is a doctor and is supposed to take care of the father. While he is trying to examine him, he feels completely paralyzed and cannot do anything. He is terror-stricken and wakes up.

In his associations he reluctantly mentions that in the last few years he has had thoughts that his father might die suddenly, and these thoughts have frightened him. Sometimes he had even thought of the estate which would be left to him and of what he would do with the money. He had not proceeded very far with these phantasies, as he suppressed them as soon as they began to appear. In comparing this dream with the one mentioned before, it strikes him that in both cases the doctor is unable to render any efficient help. He realizes more clearly than ever before that he feels that he can never be of any use as a doctor. When it is pointed out to him that in the first dream there is a definite feeling of anger and derision at the impotence of the doctor, he remembers that often when he hears or reads about cases in which a doctor has been unable to help the patient, he has a certain feeling of triumph of which he was not aware at the time.

In the further course of the analysis other material which had been repressed comes up. He discovers to his own surprise a strong feeling of rage against his father, and furthermore that his feeling of impotence as a doctor is part of a more general feeling of powerlessness which pervades his whole life. Although on the surface he thought that he had arranged his life according to his own plans, he can feel now that deeper down he was filled with a sense of resignation. He realizes that he was convinced that he

could not do what he wanted but had to conform with what was expected of him. He sees more and more clearly that he had never really wanted to become a physician and that the things which had impressed him as a lack of ability were nothing but the expression of passive resistance.

This case is a typical example of the repression of a person's real wishes and the adoption of expectations of others in a way that makes them appear to be his own wishes. We might say that the original wish is replaced by a pseudo wish.

This substitution of pseudo acts for original acts of thinking, feeling, and willing, leads eventually to the replacement of the original self by a pseudo self. The original self is the self which is the originator of mental activities. The pseudo self is only an agent who actually represents the role a person is supposed to play but who does so under the name of the self. It is true that a person can play many roles and subjectively be convinced that he is "he" in each role. Actually he is in all these roles what he believes he is expected to be, and for many people, if not most, the original self is completely suffocated by the pseudo self. Sometimes in a dream, in phantasies, or when a person is drunk, some of the original self may appear, feelings and thoughts which the person has not experienced for years. Often they are bad ones which he has repressed because he is afraid or ashamed of them. Sometimes, however, they are the very best things in him, which he has repressed because of his fear of being ridiculed or attacked for having such feelings.[68]

The loss of the self and its substitution by a pseudo self leave the individual in an intense state of insecurity. He is obsessed by doubt since, being essentially a reflex of other people's expectation of him, he has in a measure lost his identity. In order to overcome the panic resulting from such loss of identity, he is compelled to conform, to seek his identity by continuous approval and recognition by others. Since he does not know who he is, at least the others will know—if he acts according to their expectation; if they know, he will know too, if he only takes their word for it.

The automatization of the individual in modern society has increased the helplessness and insecurity of the average individual. Thus, he is ready to submit to new authorities which offer him security and relief from doubt. The following chapter will discuss the special conditions that were necessary to make this offer accepted in Germany; it will show that for the

nucleus—the lower middle class—of the Nazi movement, the authoritarian mechanism was most characteristic. In the last chapter of this book we shall continue the discussion of the automaton with regard to the cultural scene in our own democracy.

VI PSYCHOLOGY OF NAZISM

In the last chapter our attention was focused on two psychological types: the authoritarian character and the automaton. I hope that the detailed discussion of these types will help in the understanding of the problems which this and the next chapter offer: the psychology of Nazism on the one hand, modern democracy on the other.

In discussing the psychology of Nazism we have first to consider a preliminary question—the relevance of psychological factors in the understanding of Nazism. In the scientific and still more so in the popular discussion of Nazism, two opposite views are frequently presented: the first, that psychology offers no explanation of an economic and political phenomenon like Fascism, the second, that Fascism is wholly a psychological problem.

The first view looks upon Nazism either as the outcome of an exclusively economic dynamism—of the expansive tendencies of German imperialism, or as an essentially political phenomenon—the conquest of the state by one political party backed by industrialists and Junkers; in short, the victory of Nazism is looked upon as the result of a minority's trickery and coercion of the majority of the population.

The second view, on the other hand, maintains that Nazism can be explained only in terms of psychology, or rather in those of psychopathology. Hitler is looked upon as a madman or as a "neurotic," and his followers as equally mad and mentally unbalanced. According to this explanation, as expounded by L. Mumford, the true sources of Fascism are to be found "in the human soul, *not in economics*." He goes on: "In overwhelming pride, delight in cruelty, neurotic disintegration—in this and not in the Treaty of Versailles or in the incompetence of the German Republic lies the explanation of Fascism."[69]

In our opinion none of these explanations which emphasize political and economic factors to the exclusion of psychological ones—or vice versa—is correct. Nazism is a psychological problem, but the psychological factors themselves have to be understood as being molded by socio-

economic factors; Nazism is an economic and political problem, but the hold it has over a whole people has to be understood on psychological grounds. What we are concerned with in this chapter is this psychological aspect of Nazism, its human basis. This suggests two problems: the character structure of those people to whom it appealed, and the psychological characteristics of the ideology that made it such an effective instrument with regard to those very people.

In considering the psychological basis for the success of Nazism this differentiation has to be made at the outset: one part of the population bowed to the Nazi regime without any strong resistance, but also without becoming admirers of the Nazi ideology and political practice. Another part was deeply attracted to the new ideology and fanatically attached to those who proclaimed it. The first group consisted mainly of the working class and the liberal and Catholic bourgeoisie. In spite of an excellent organization, especially among the working class, these groups, although continuously hostile to Nazism from its beginning up to 1933, did not show the inner resistance one might have expected as the outcome of their political convictions. Their will to resist collapsed quickly and since then they have caused little difficulty for the regime (excepting, of course, the small minority which has fought heroically against Nazism during all these years). Psychologically, this readiness to submit to the Nazi regime seems to be due mainly to a state of inner tiredness and resignation, which, as will be indicated in the next chapter, is characteristic of the individual in the present era even in democratic countries. In Germany one additional condition was present as far as the working class was concerned: the defeat it suffered after the first victories in the revolution of 1918. The working class had entered the postwar period with strong hopes for the realization of socialism or at least for a definite rise in its political, economic, and social position; but, whatever the reasons, it had witnessed an unbroken succession of defeats, which brought about the complete disappointments of all its hopes. By the beginning of 1930 the fruits of its initial victories were almost completely destroyed and the result was a deep feeling of resignation, of disbelief in their leaders, of doubt about the value of any kind of political organization and political activity. They still remained members of their respective parties and, consciously, continued to believe in their political doctrines; but deep within themselves many had given up any hope in the effectiveness of political action.

An additional incentive for the loyalty of the majority of the population to the Nazi government became effective after Hitler came into power. For millions of people Hitler's government then became identical with "Germany" Once he held the power of government, fighting him implied shutting oneself out of the community of Germans; when other political parties were abolished and the Nazi party "was" Germany, opposition to it meant opposition to Germany. It seems that nothing is more difficult for the average man to bear than the feeling of not being identified with a larger group. However much a German citizen may be opposed to the principles of Nazism, if he has to choose between being alone and feeling that he belongs to Germany, most persons will choose the latter. It can be observed in many instances that persons who are not Nazis nevertheless defend Nazism against criticism of foreigners because they feel that an attack on Nazis is an attack on Germany. The fear of isolation and the relative weakness of moral principles help any party to win the loyalty of a large sector of the population once that party has captured the power of the state.

This consideration results in an axiom which is important for the problems of political propaganda: any attack on Germany as such, any defamatory propaganda concerning "the Germans" (such as the "Hun" symbol of the last war), only increases the loyalty of those who are not wholly identified with the Nazi system. This problem, however, cannot be solved basically by skillful propaganda but only by the victory in all countries of one fundamental truth: that ethical principles stand above the existence of the nation and that by adhering to these principles an individual belongs to the community of all those who share, who have shared, and who will share this belief.

In contrast to the negative or resigned attitude of the working class and of the liberal and Catholic bourgeoisie, the Nazi ideology was ardently greeted by the lower strata of the middle class, composed of small shopkeepers, artisans, and white-collar workers.[70]

Members of the older generation among this class formed the more passive mass basis; their sons and daughters were the more active fighters. For them the Nazi ideology—its spirit of blind obedience to a leader and of hatred against racial and political minorities, its craving for conquest and domination, its exaltation of the German people and the "Nordic Race"—had a tremendous emotional appeal, and it was this appeal which won them

over and made them into ardent believers in and fighters for the Nazi cause. The answer to the question why the Nazi ideology was so appealing to the lower middle class has to be sought for in the social character of the lower middle class. Their social character was markedly different from that of the working class, of the higher strata of the middle class, and of the nobility and the upper classes. As a matter of fact, certain features were characteristic for this part of the middle class throughout its history: their love of the strong, hatred of the weak, their pettiness, hostility, thriftiness with feelings as well as with money, and essentially their asceticism. Their outlook on life was narrow, they suspected and hated the stranger, and they were curious and envious of their acquaintances, rationalizing their envy as moral indignation; their whole life was based on the principle of scarcity—economically as well as psychologically.

To say that the social character of the lower middle class differed from that of the working class does not imply that this character structure was not present in the working class also. But it was *typical* for the lower middle class, while only a minority of the working class exhibited the same character structure in a similarly clear-cut fashion; the one or the other trait, however, in a less intense form, like enhanced respect of authority or thrift, was to be found in most members of the working class too. On the other hand it seems that a great part of the white-collar workers—probably the majority—more closely resembled the character structure of the manual workers (especially those in big factories) than that of the "old middle class," which did not participate in the rise of monopolistic capitalism but was essentially threatened by it.[71]

Although it is true that the social character of the lower middle class had been the same long before the war of 1914, it is also true that the events after the war intensified the very traits to which the Nazi ideology had its strong appeal: its craving for submission and its lust for power.

In the period before the German Revolution of 1918, the economic position of the lower strata of the old middle class, the small independent businessman and artisan, was already on the decline; but it was not desperate and there were a number of factors which made for its stability.

The authority of the monarchy was undisputed, and by leaning on it and identifying with it the member of the lower middle class acquired a feeling of security and narcissistic pride. Also, the authority of religion and traditional morality was still firmly rooted. The family was still unshaken

and a safe refuge in a hostile world. The individual felt that he belonged to a stable social and cultural system in which he had his definite place. His submission and loyalty to existing authorities were a satisfactory solution of his masochistic strivings; yet he did not go to the extreme of self-surrender and he retained a sense of the importance of his own personality. What he was lacking in security and aggressiveness as an individual, he was compensated for by the strength of the authorities to whom he submitted himself. In brief his economic position was still solid enough to give him a feeling of self-pride and of relative security, and the authorities on whom he leaned were strong enough to give him the additional security which his own individual position could not provide.

The postwar period changed this situation considerably. In the first place, the economic decline of the old middle class went at a faster pace; this decline was accelerated by the inflation, culminating in 1923, which wiped out almost completely the savings of many years' work.

While the years between 1924 and 1928 brought economic improvement and new hopes to the lower middle class, these gains were wiped out by the depression after 1929. As in the period of inflation, the middle class, squeezed in between the workers and the upper classes, was the most defenseless group and therefore the hardest hit.[72]

But besides these economic factors there were psychological considerations that aggravated the situation. The defeat in the war and the downfall of the monarchy was one. While the monarchy and the state had been the solid rock on which, psychologically speaking, the petty bourgeois had built his existence, their failure and defeat shattered the basis of his own life. If the Kaiser could be publicly ridiculed, if officers could be attacked, if the state had to change its form and to accept "red agitators" as cabinet ministers and a saddle-maker as president, what could the little man put his trust in? He had identified himself in his subaltern manner with all these institutions; now, since they had gone, where was he to go?

The inflation, too, played both an economic and a psychological role. It was a deadly blow against the principle of thrift as well as against the authority of the state. If the savings of many years, for which one had sacrificed so many little pleasures, could be lost through no fault of one's own, what was the point in saving anyway? If the state could break its promises printed on its bank notes and loans, whose promises could one trust any longer?

It was not only the economic position of the lower middle class that declined more rapidly after the war, but its social prestige as well. Before the war one could feel himself as something better than a worker. After the revolution the social prestige of the working class rose considerably and in consequence the prestige of the lower middle class fell in relative terms. There was nobody to look down upon any more, a privilege that had always been one of the strongest assets in the life of small shopkeepers and their like.

In addition to these factors the last stronghold of middle-class security had been shattered too: the family. The postwar development, in Germany perhaps more than in other countries, had shaken the authority of the father and the old middle-class morality. The younger generation acted as they pleased and cared no longer whether their actions were approved by their parents or not.

The reasons for this development are too manifold and complex to discuss here in detail. I shall mention only a few. The decline of the old social symbols of authority like monarchy and state affected the role of the individual authorities, the parents. If these authorities, which the younger generation had been taught by the parents to respect, proved to be weak, then the parents lost prestige and authority too. Another factor was that, under the changed conditions, especially the inflation, the older generation was bewildered and puzzled and much less adapted to the new conditions than the smarter, younger generation. Thus the younger generation felt superior to their elders and could not take them, and their teachings, quite seriously any more. Furthermore, the economic decline of the middle class deprived the parents of their economic role as backers of the economic future of their children.

The older generation of the lower middle class grew more bitter and resentful, but in a passive way; the younger generation was driving for action. Its economic position was aggravated by the fact that the basis for an independent economic existence, such as their parents had had, was lost; the professional market was saturated, and the chances of making a living as a physician or lawyer were slight. Those who had fought in the war felt that they had a claim for a better deal than they were actually getting. Especially the many young officers, who for years had been accustomed to command and to exercise power quite naturally, could not reconcile themselves to becoming clerks or traveling salesmen.

The increasing social frustration led to a projection which became an important source for National Socialism: instead of being aware of the economic and social fate of the old middle class, its members consciously thought of their fate in terms of the nation. The national defeat and the Treaty of Versailles became the symbols to which the actual frustration—the social one—was shifted.

It has often been said that the treatment of Germany by the victors in 1918 was one of the chief reasons for the rise of Nazism. This statement needs qualification. The majority of Germans felt that the peace treaty was unjust; but while the middle class reacted with intense bitterness, there was much less bitterness at the Versailles Treaty among the working class. They had been opposed to the old regime and the loss of the war for them meant defeat of that regime. They felt that they had fought bravely and that they had no reason to be ashamed of themselves. On the other hand the victory of the revolution which had only been possible by the defeat of the monarchy had brought them economic, political, and human gains. The resentment against Versailles had its basis in the lower middle class; the nationalistic resentment was a rationalization, projecting social inferiority to national inferiority.

This projection is quite apparent in Hitler's personal development. He was the typical representative of the lower middle class, a nobody with no chances or future. He felt very intensely the role of being an outcast. He often speaks in *Mein Kampf* of himself as the "nobody" the "unknown man" he was in his youth. But although this was due essentially to his own social position, he could rationalize it in national symbols. Being born outside of the Reich he felt excluded not so much socially as nationally, and the great German Reich to which all her sons could return became for him the symbol of social prestige and security.[73]

The old middle class's feeling of powerlessness, anxiety, and isolation from the social whole and the destructiveness springing from this situation was not the only psychological source of Nazism. The peasants felt resentful against the urban creditors to whom they were in debt, while the workers felt deeply disappointed and discouraged by the constant political retreat after their first victories in 1918 under a leadership which had lost all strategic initiative. The vast majority of the population was seized with the feeling of individual insignificance and powerlessness which we have described as typical for monopolistic capitalism in general.

Those psychological conditions were not the “cause” of Nazism. They constituted its human basis without which it could not have developed, but any analysis of the whole phenomenon of the rise and victory of Nazism must deal with the strictly economic and political, as well as with the psychological, conditions. In view both of the literature dealing with this aspect and of the specific aims of this book, there is no need to enter into a discussion of these economic and political questions. The reader may be reminded, however, of the role which the representatives of big industry and the half-bankrupt Junkers played in the establishment of Nazism. Without their support Hitler could never have won, and their support was rooted in their understanding of their economic interests much more than in psychological factors.

This property-owning class was confronted with a parliament in which 40 per cent of the deputies were Socialists and Communists representing groups which were dissatisfied with the existing social system, and in which were an increasing number of Nazi deputies who also represented a class that was in bitter opposition to the most powerful representatives of German capitalism. A parliament which thus in its majority represented tendencies directed against their economic interest deemed them dangerous. They said democracy did not work. Actually one might say democracy worked too well. The parliament was a rather adequate representation of the respective interests of the different classes of the German population, and for this very reason the parliamentary system could not any longer be reconciled with the need to preserve the privileges of big industry and half-feudal landowners. The representatives of these privileged groups expected that Nazism would shift the emotional resentment which threatened them into other channels and at the same time harness the nation into the service of their own economic interests. On the whole they were not disappointed. To be sure, in minor details they were mistaken. Hitler and his bureaucracy were not tools to be ordered around by the Thyssens and Krupps, who had to share their power with the Nazi bureaucracy and often to submit to them. But although Nazism proved to be economically detrimental to all other classes, it fostered the interests of the most powerful groups of German industry. The Nazi system is the “streamlined” version of German prewar imperialism and it continued where the monarchy had failed. (The Republic, however, did not really interrupt the development of German monopolistic capitalism but furthered it with the means at her disposal.)

There is one question that many a reader will have in mind at this point: How can one reconcile the statement that the psychological basis of Nazism was the old middle class with the statement that Nazism functions in the interests of German imperialism? The answer to this question is in principle the same as that which was given to the question concerning the role of the urban middle class during the period of the rise of capitalism. In the postwar period it was the middle class, particularly the lower middle class, that was threatened by monopolistic capitalism. Its anxiety and thereby its hatred were aroused; it moved into a state of panic and was filled with a craving for submission to as well as for domination over those who were powerless. These feelings were used by an entirely different class for a regime which was to work for their own interests. Hitler proved to be such an efficient tool because he combined the characteristics of a resentful, hating, petty bourgeois, with whom the lower middle class could identify themselves emotionally and socially, with those of an opportunist who was ready to serve the interests of the German industrialists and Junkers. Originally he posed as the Messiah of the old middle class, promised the destruction of department stores, the breaking of the domination of banking capital, and so on. The record is clear enough. These promises were never fulfilled. However, that did not matter. Nazism never had any genuine political or economic principles. It is essential to understand that the very principle of Nazism is its radical opportunism. What mattered was that hundreds of thousands of petty bourgeois, who in the normal course of development had little chance to gain money or power, as members of the Nazi bureaucracy now got a large slice of the wealth and prestige they forced the upper classes to share with them. Others who were not members of the Nazi machine were given the jobs taken away from Jews and political enemies; and as for the rest, although they did not get more bread, they got "circuses." The emotional satisfaction afforded by these sadistic spectacles and by an ideology which gave them a feeling of superiority over the rest of mankind was able to compensate them—for a time at least—for the fact that their lives had been impoverished, economically and culturally.

We have seen, then, that certain socioeconomic changes, notably the decline of the middle class and the rising power of monopolistic capital, had a deep psychological effect. These effects were increased or systematized by a political ideology—as by religious ideologies in the sixteenth century—and the psychic forces thus aroused became effective in a direction that

was opposite to the original economic interests of that class. Nazism resurrected the lower middle class psychologically while participating in the destruction of its old socioeconomic position. It mobilized its emotional energies to become an important force in the struggle for the economic and political aims of German imperialism.

In the following pages we shall try to show that Hitler's personality, his teachings, and the Nazi system express an extreme form of the character structure which we have called "authoritarian" and that by this very fact he made a powerful appeal to those parts of the population which were—more or less—of the same character structure.

Hitler's autobiography is as good an illustration of the authoritarian character as any, and since in addition to that it is the most representative document of Nazi literature I shall use it as the main source for analyzing the psychology of Nazism.

The essence of the authoritarian character has been described as the simultaneous presence of sadistic and masochistic drives. Sadism was understood as aiming at unrestricted power over another person more or less mixed with destructiveness; masochism as aiming at dissolving oneself in an overwhelmingly strong power and participating in its strength and glory. Both the sadistic and the masochistic trends are caused by the inability of the isolated individual to stand alone and his need for a symbiotic relationship that overcomes this aloneness.

The *sadistic craving for power* finds manifold expressions in *Mein Kampf.* It is characteristic of Hitler's relationship to the German masses whom he despises and "loves" in the typically sadistic manner, as well as to his political enemies towards whom he evidences those destructive elements that are an important component of his sadism. He speaks of the satisfaction the masses have in domination. "What they want is the victory of the stronger and the annihilation or the unconditional surrender of the weaker." (*Op. cit.*, p. 469.)

> "Like a woman…. who will submit to the strong man rather than dominate the weakling, thus the masses love the ruler rather than the suppliant, and inwardly they are far more satisfied by a doctrine which tolerates no rival than by the grant of liberal freedom; they often feel at a loss what to do with it, and even easily feel themselves deserted. They neither realize the impudence with which they are spiritually terrorized, nor the outrageous curtailment of their

human liberties for in no way does the delusion of this doctrine dawn on them." (*Op. cit.*, p. 56.)

He describes the breaking of the will of the audience by the superior strength of the speaker as the essential factor in propaganda. He does not even hesitate to admit that physical tiredness of his audience is a most welcome condition for their suggestibility. Discussing the question which hour of the day is most suited for political mass meetings he says:

"It seems that in the morning and even during the day men's will power revolts with highest energy against an attempt at being forced under another's will and another's opinion. In the evening, however, they succumb more easily to the dominating force of a stronger will. For truly every such meeting presents a wrestling match between two opposed forces. The superior oratorical talent of a domineering apostolic nature will now succeed more easily in winning for the new will people who themselves have in turn experienced a weakening of their force of resistance in the most natural way, than people who still have full command of the energies of their minds and their will power." (*Op. cit.*, p. 710 ff.)

Hitler himself is very much aware of the conditions which make for the longing for submission and gives an excellent description of the situation of the individual attending a mass meeting.

"The mass meeting is necessary if only for the reason that in it the individual, who is becoming an adherent of a new movement feels lonely and is easily seized with the fear of being alone, receives for the first time the pictures of a greater community, something that has a strengthening and encouraging effect on most people. … If he steps for the first time out of his small workshop or out of the big enterprise, in which he feels very small, into the mass meeting and is now surrounded by thousands and thousands of people with the same conviction… he himself succumbs to the magic influence of what we call mass suggestion. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 715, 716.)

Goebbels describes the masses in the same vein. "People want nothing at all, except to be governed decently," he writes in his novel *Michael*.[74] They are for him, "nothing more than the stone is for the sculptor. Leader and masses is as little a problem as painter and color." (*Op. cit.*, p. 21.)

In another book Goebbels gives an accurate description of the dependence of the sadistic person on his objects; how weak and empty he feels unless he has power over somebody and how this power gives him

new strength. This is Goebbels' account of what is going on in himself: "Sometimes one is gripped by a deep depression. One can only overcome it, if one is in front of the masses again. The people are the fountain of our power."[75]

A telling account of that particular kind of power over people which the Nazis call leadership is given by the leader of the German labor front, Ley. In discussing the qualities required in a Nazi leader and the aims of education of leaders, he writes: "We want to know whether these men have the will to lead, to be masters, in one word, to rule… We want to rule and enjoy it. … We shall teach these men to ride horseback… in order to give them the feeling of absolute domination over a living being."[76]

The same emphasis on power is also present in Hitler's formulation of the aims of education. He says that the pupil's "entire education and development has to be directed at giving him the conviction of being absolutely superior to the others."[77]

The fact that somewhere else he declares that a boy should be taught to suffer injustice without rebelling will no longer strike the reader—or so I hope—as strange. This contradiction is the typical one for the sado-masochistic ambivalence between the craving for power and for submission.

The wish for power over the masses is what drives the member of the "elite," the Nazi leaders. As the quotations above show, this wish for power is sometimes revealed with an almost astonishing frankness. Sometimes it is put in less offensive forms by emphasizing that to be ruled is just what the masses wish. Sometimes the necessity to flatter the masses and therefore to hide the cynical contempt for them leads to tricks like the following: In speaking of the instinct of self-preservation, which for Hitler as we shall see later is more or less identical with the drive for power, he says that with the Aryan the instinct for self-preservation has reached the most noble form "because he willingly subjects his own ego to the life of the community and, if the hour should require it, he also sacrifices it." (*Op. cit.*, p. 408.)

While the "leaders" are the ones to enjoy power in the first place, the masses are by no means deprived of sadistic satisfaction. Racial and political minorities within Germany and eventually other nations which are described as weak or decaying are the objects of sadism upon which the masses are fed. While Hitler and his bureaucracy enjoy the power over the

German masses, these masses themselves are taught to enjoy power over other nations and to be driven by the passion for domination of the world.

Hitler does not hesitate to express the wish for world domination as his or his party's aim. Making fun of pacifism, he says: "Indeed, the pacifist-humane idea is perhaps quite good whenever the man of the highest standard has previously conquered and subjected the world to a degree that makes him the only master of this globe." (*Op. cit.*, p. 394 f.)

Again he says: "A state which in the epoch of race poisoning dedicates itself to the cherishing of its best racial elements, must some day be master of the world." (*Op. cit.*, p. 994.)

Usually Hitler tries to rationalize and justify his wish for power. The main justifications are the following: his domination of other peoples is for their own good and for the good of the culture of the world; the wish for power is rooted in the eternal laws of nature and he recognizes and follows only these laws; he himself acts under the command of a higher power—God, Fate, History, Nature; his attempts for domination are only a defense against the attempts of others to dominate him and the German people. He wants only peace and freedom.

An example of the first kind of rationalization is the following paragraph from *Mein Kampf:*

> "If, in its historical development, the German people had possessed this group unity as it was enjoyed by other peoples, then the German Reich would today probably be the mistress of this globe." German domination of the world could lead, Hitler assumes, to a "peace, supported not by the palm branches of tearful pacifist professional female mourners, but founded by the victorious sword of a people of overlords which puts the world into the service of a higher culture." (*Op. cit.*, p. 598 ff.)

In recent years his assurances that his aim is not only the welfare of Germany but that his actions serve the best interests of civilization in general have become well known to every newspaper reader.

The second rationalization, that his wish for power is rooted in the laws of nature, is more than a mere rationalization; it also springs from the wish for submission to a power outside of oneself, as expressed particularly in Hitler's crude popularization of Darwinism. In "the instinct of preserving the species," Hitler sees "the first cause of the formation of human communities." (*Op. cit.*, p. 197.)

This instinct of self-preservation leads to the fight of the stronger for the domination of the weaker and economically, eventually, to the survival of the fittest. The identification of the instinct of self-preservation with power over others finds a particularly striking expression in Hitler's assumption that "the first culture of mankind certainly depended less on the tamed animal, but rather on the use of inferior people." (*Op. cit.*, p. 405.) He projects his own sadism upon Nature who is "the cruel Queen of all Wisdom," (*op. cit.*, p. 170) and her law of preservation is "bound to the brazen law of necessity and of the right of the victory of the best and the strongest in this world." (*Op. cit.*, p. 396.)

It is interesting to observe that in connection with this crude Darwinism the "socialist" Hitler champions the liberal principles of unrestricted competition. In a polemic against cooperation between different nationalistic groups he says: "By such a combination the free play of energies is tied up, the struggle for choosing the best is stopped, and accordingly the necessary and final victory of the healthier and stronger man is prevented forever." (*Op. cit.*, p. 761.) Elsewhere he speaks of the free play of energies as the wisdom of life.

To be sure, Darwin's theory as such was not an expression of the feelings of a sado-masochistic character. On the contrary, for many of its adherents it appealed to the hope of a further evolution of mankind to higher stages of culture. For Hitler, however, it was an expression of and simultaneously a justification for his own sadism. He reveals quite naively the psychological significance which the Darwinian theory had for him. When he lived in Munich, still an unknown man, he used to awake at 5 o'clock in the morning. He had "gotten into the habit of throwing pieces of bread or hard crusts to the little mice which spent their time in the small room, and then of watching these droll little animals romp and scuffle for these few delicacies." (*Op. cit.*, p. 295.) This "game" was the Darwinian "struggle for life" on a small scale. For Hitler it was the petty bourgeois substitute for the circuses of the Roman Caesars, and a preliminary for the historical circuses he was to produce.

The last rationalization for his sadism, his justification of it as a defense against attacks of others, finds manifold expressions in Hitler's writings. He and the German people are always the ones who are innocent and the enemies are sadistic brutes. A great deal of this propaganda consists of deliberate, conscious lies. Partly, however, it has the same emotional

"sincerity" which paranoid accusations have. These accusations always have the function of a defense against being found out with regard to one's own sadism or destructiveness. They run according to the formula: It is you who have sadistic intention. Therefore I am innocent. With Hitler this defensive mechanism is irrational to the extreme, since he accuses his enemies of the very things he quite frankly admits to be his own aims. Thus he accuses the Jews, the Communists, and the French of the very things that he says are the most legitimate aims of his own actions. He scarcely bothers to cover this contradiction by rationalizations. He accuses the Jews of bringing the French African troops to the Rhine with the intention to destroy, by the bastardization which would necessarily set in, the white race and thus "in turn to rise personally to the position of master." (*Op. cit.*, p. 448 ff.) Hitler must have detected the contradiction of condemning others for that which he claims to be the most noble aim of his race, and he tries to rationalize the contradiction by saying of the Jews that *their* instinct for self-preservation lacks the idealistic character which is to be found in the Aryan drive for mastery. (Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 414.)

The same accusations are used against the French. He accuses them of wanting to strangle Germany and to rob it of its strength. While this accusation is used as an argument for the necessity of destroying "the French drive for European hegemony," (*op. cit.*, p. 966) he confesses that he would have acted like Clemenceau had he been in his place. (Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 978.)

The Communists are accused of brutality and the success of Marxism is attributed to its political will and activistic brutality. At the same time, however, Hitler declares: "What Germany was lacking was a close co-operation of brutal power and ingenious political intention." (*Op. cit.*, p. 783.)

The Czech crisis in 1938 and this present war brought many examples of the same kind. There was no act of Nazi oppression which was not explained as a defense against oppression by others. One can assume that these accusations were mere falsifications and have not the paranoid "sincerity" which those against the Jews and the French might have been colored by. They still have a definite propaganda value, and part of the population, in particular the lower middle class which is receptive to these paranoid accusations on account of its own character structure, believed them.

Hitler's contempt for the powerless ones becomes particularly apparent when he speaks of people whose political aims—the fight for national freedom—were similar to those which he himself professed to have. Perhaps nowhere is the insincerity of Hitler's interest in national freedom more blatant than in his scorn for powerless revolutionaries. Thus he speaks in an ironical and contemptuous manner of the little group of National Socialists he had originally joined in Munich. This was his impression of the first meeting he went to: "Terrible, terrible; this was club making of the worst kind and manner. And this club I now was to join? Then the new memberships were discussed, that means, my being caught." (*Op. cit.*, p. 298.)

He calls them "a ridiculous small foundation," the only advantage of which was to offer "the chance for real personal activity." (*Op. cit.*, p. 300.) Hitler says that he would never have joined one of the existing big parties and this attitude is very characteristic of him. He had to start in a group which he felt to be inferior and weak. His initiative and courage would not have been stimulated in a constellation where he had to fight existing power or to compete with his equals.

He shows the same contempt for the powerless ones in what he writes about Indian revolutionaries. The same man who has used the slogan of national freedom for his own purposes more than anybody else, has nothing but contempt for such revolutionists who had no power and who dared to attack the powerful British Empire. He remembers, Hitler says,

> "some Asiatic fakir or other, perhaps, for all I care, some real Indian 'fighters for freedom,' who were then running around Europe, contrived to stuff even otherwise quite intelligent people with the fixed idea that the British Empire, whose keystone is in India, was on the verge of collapse right there. … Indian rebels will, however, never achieve this. … It is simply an impossibility for a coalition of cripples to storm a powerful State. … I may not, simply because of my knowledge of their racial inferiority, link my own nation's fate with that of these so-called 'oppressed nations.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 955 ff.)

The love for the powerful and the hatred for the powerless which is so typical for the sado-masochistic character explains a great deal of Hitler's and his followers' political actions. While the Republican government thought they could "appease" the Nazis by treating them leniently, they not only failed to appease them but aroused their hatred by the very lack of

power and firmness they showed. Hitler hated the Weimar Republic *because* it was weak and he admired the industrial and military leaders because they had power. He never fought against established strong power but always against groups which he thought to be essentially powerless. Hitler's—and for that matter, Mussolini's—"revolution" happened under protection of existing power and their favorite objects were those who could not defend themselves. One might even venture to assume that Hitler's attitude toward Great Britain was determined, among other factors, by this psychological complex. As long as he felt Britain to be powerful, he loved and admired her. His book gives expression to this love for Britain. When he recognized the weakness of the British position before and after Munich his love changed into hatred and the wish to destroy it. From this viewpoint "appeasement" was a policy which for a personality like Hitler was bound to arouse hatred, not friendship.

So far we have spoken of the *sadistic* side in Hitler's ideology. However, as we have seen in the discussion of the authoritarian character, there is the *masochistic* side as well as the sadistic one. There is the wish to submit to an overwhelmingly strong power, to annihilate the self, besides the wish to have power over helpless beings. This masochistic side of the Nazi ideology and practice is most obvious with respect to the masses. They are told again and again: the individual is nothing and does not count. The individual should accept this personal insignificance, dissolve himself in a higher power, and then feel proud in participating in the strength and glory of this higher power. Hitler expresses this idea clearly in his definition of idealism: "Idealism alone leads men to voluntary acknowledgment of the privilege of force and strength and thus makes them become a dust particle of that order which forms and shapes the entire universe." (*Op. cit.*, p. 411.)

Goebbels gives a similar definition of what he calls Socialism: "To be a socialist," he writes, "is to submit the I to the thou; socialism is sacrificing the individual to the whole."[78]

Sacrificing the individual and reducing it to a bit of dust, to an atom, implies, according to Hitler, the renunciation of the right to assert one's individual opinion, interests, and happiness. This renunciation is the essence of a political organization in which "the individual renounces representing his personal opinion and his interests…" (Hitler, *op. cit.*, p. 408.) He praises "unselfishness" and teaches that "in the hunt for their own happiness, people fall all the more out of heaven into hell." (*Op. cit.*, p.

412.) It is the aim of education to teach the individual not to assert his self. Already the boy in school must learn “to be silent, not only when he is blamed justly but he has also to learn, if necessary, to bear injustice in silence.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 620 ff.) Concerning his ultimate goal he writes: “In the folkish State the folkish view of life has finally to succeed in bringing about that nobler era when men see their care no longer in the better breeding of dogs, horses and cats, but rather in the uplifting of mankind itself, an era in which the one knowingly and silently renounces, and the other gladly gives and sacrifices.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 610.)

This sentence is somewhat surprising. One would expect that after the description of the one type of individual, who “knowingly and silently renounces,” an opposite type would be described, perhaps the one who leads, takes responsibility, or something similar. But instead of that, Hitler defines that “other” type also by his ability to sacrifice. It is difficult to understand the difference between “silently renounces,” and “gladly sacrifices.” If I may venture a guess, I believe that Hitler really intended in his mind to differentiate between the masses who should resign and the ruler who should rule. But while sometimes he quite overtly admits his and the “elite’s” wish for power, he often denies it. In this sentence he apparently did not want to be so frank and therefore substituted for the wish to rule, the wish to “gladly give and sacrifice.”

Hitler recognizes clearly that his philosophy of self-denial and sacrifice is meant for those whose economic situation does not allow them any happiness. He does not want to bring about a social order which would make personal happiness possible for every individual; he wants to exploit the very poverty of the masses in order to make them believe in his evangelism of self annihilation. Quite frankly he declares: “We turn to the great army of those who are so poor that their personal lives could not mean the highest fortune of the world…” (*Op. cit.*, p. 610.)

This whole preaching of self-sacrifice has an obvious purpose: The masses have to resign themselves and submit if the wish for power on the side of the leader and the “elite” is to be realized. But this masochistic longing is also to be found in Hitler himself. For him the superior power to which he submits is God, Fate, Necessity, History, Nature. Actually all these terms have about the same meaning to him, that of symbols of an overwhelmingly strong power. He starts his autobiography with the remark that to him it was a “good fortune that Fate designated Braunau on the Inn

as the place of my birth." (*Op. cit.*, p. 1.) He then goes on to say that the whole German people must be united in one state because only then, when this state would be too small for them all, necessity would give them "the moral right to acquire soil and territory." (*Op. cit.*, p. 3.)

The defeat in the war of 1914-1918 to him is "a deserved punishment by eternal retribution." (*Op. cit.*, p. 309.) Nations that mix themselves with other races "sin against the will of eternal *Providence*"(*op. cit.*, p. 452.) or, as he puts it another time, "against the will of the Eternal Creator." (*Op. cit.*, p. 392.) Germany's mission is ordered by "the Creator of the universe." (*Op. cit.*, p. 289.) Heaven is superior to people, for luckily one can fool people but "Heaven could not be bribed." (*Op. cit.*, p. 972.)

The power which impresses Hitler probably more than God, Providence, and Fate, is Nature. While it was the trend of the historical development of the last four hundred years to replace the domination over men by the domination over Nature, Hitler insists that one can and should rule over men but that one cannot rule over Nature. I have already quoted his saying that the history of mankind probably did not start with the domestication of animals but with the domination over inferior people. He ridicules the idea that man could conquer Nature and makes fun of those who believe to become conquerors of Nature "whereas they have no other weapon at their disposal but an 'idea.'" He says that man "does not dominate Nature, but that, based on the knowledge of a few laws and secrets of Nature, he has risen to the position of master of those other living beings lacking this knowledge." (*Op. cit.*, p. 393 ff.) There again we find the same idea: Nature is the great power we have to submit to, but living beings are the ones we should dominate.

I have tried to show in Hitler's writings the two trends that we have already described as fundamental for the authoritarian character: the craving for power over men and the longing for submission to an overwhelmingly strong outside power. Hitler's ideas are more or less identical with the ideology of the Nazi party. The ideas expressed in his book are those which he expressed in the countless speeches by which he won mass following for his party. This ideology results from his personality which, with its inferiority feeling, hatred against life, asceticism, and envy of those who enjoy life, is the soil of sadomasochistic strivings; it was addressed to people who, on account of their similar character structure, felt attracted and excited by these teachings and became ardent followers of the man who

expressed what they felt. But it was not only the Nazi ideology that satisfied the lower middle class; the political practice realized what the ideology promised. A hierarchy was created in which everyone has somebody above him to submit to and somebody beneath him to feel power over; the man at the top, the leader, has Fate, History, Nature above him as the power in which to submerge himself. Thus the Nazi ideology and practice satisfies the desires springing from the character structure of one part of the population and gives direction and orientation to those who, though not enjoying domination and submission, were resigned and had given up faith in life, in their own decisions, in everything.

Do these considerations give any clue for a prognosis with regard to the stability of Nazism in the future? I do not feel qualified to make any predictions. Yet a few points—such as those that follow from the psychological premises we have been discussing—would seem to be worth raising. Given the psychological conditions, does Nazism not fulfill the emotional needs of the population, and is this psychological function not one factor that makes for its growing stability?

From all that has been said so far, it is evident that the answer to this question is in the negative. The fact of human individuation, of the destruction of all “primary bonds,” cannot be reversed. The process of the destruction of the medieval world has taken four hundred years and is being completed in our era. Unless the whole industrial system, the whole mode of production, should be destroyed and changed to the pre-industrial level, man will remain an individual who has completely emerged from the world surrounding him. We have seen that man cannot endure this negative freedom; that he tries to escape into new bondage which is to be a substitute for the primary bonds which he has given up. But these new bonds do not constitute real union with the world. He pays for the new security by giving up the integrity of his self. The factual dichotomy between him and these authorities does not disappear. They thwart and cripple his life even though consciously he may submit voluntarily. At the same time he lives in a world in which he has not only developed into being an “atom” but which also provides him with every potentiality for becoming an individual. The modern industrial system has virtually a capacity to produce not only the means for an economically secure life for everybody but also to create the material basis for the full expression of man’s intellectual, sensuous, and

emotional potentialities, while at the same time reducing considerably the hours of work.

The function of an authoritarian ideology and practice can be compared to the function of neurotic symptoms. Such symptoms result from unbearable psychological conditions and at the same time offer a solution that makes life possible. Yet they are not a solution that leads to happiness or growth of personality. They leave unchanged the conditions that necessitate the neurotic solution. The dynamism of man's nature is an important factor that tends to seek for more satisfying solutions if there is a possibility of attaining them. The aloneness and powerlessness of the individual, his quest for the realization of potentialities which developed in him, the objective fact of the increasing productive capacity of modern industry, are dynamic factors, which constitute the basis for a growing quest for freedom and happiness. The escape into symbiosis can alleviate the suffering for a time but it does not eliminate it. The history of mankind is the history of growing individuation, but it is also the history of growing freedom. The quest for freedom is not a metaphysical force and cannot be explained by natural law; it is the necessary result of the process of individuation and of the growth of culture. The authoritarian systems cannot do away with the basic conditions that make for the quest for freedom; neither can they exterminate the quest for freedom that springs from these conditions.

VII FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY

1. The Illusion of Individuality

In the previous chapters I have tried to show that certain factors in the modern industrial system in general and in its monopolistic phase in particular make for the development of a personality which feels powerless and alone, anxious and insecure. I have discussed the specific conditions in Germany which make part of her population fertile soil for an ideology and political practice that appeal to what I have described as the authoritarian character.

But what about ourselves? Is our own democracy threatened only by Fascism beyond the Atlantic or by the "fifth column" in our own ranks? If that were the case, the situation would be serious but not critical. But although foreign and internal threats of Fascism must be taken seriously, there is no greater mistake and no graver danger than not to see that in our own society we are faced with the same phenomenon that is fertile soil for the rise of Fascism anywhere: the insignificance and powerlessness of the individual.

This statement challenges the conventional belief that by freeing the individual from all external restraints modern democracy has achieved true individualism. We are proud that we are not subject to any external authority, that we are free to express our thoughts and feelings, and we take it for granted that this freedom almost automatically guarantees our individuality. *The right to express our thoughts*, however, *means something only if we are able to have thoughts of our own;* freedom from external authority is a lasting gain only if the inner psychological conditions are such that we are able to establish our own individuality. Have we achieved that aim, or are we at least approaching it? This book deals with the human factor; its task, therefore, is to analyze this very question critically. In doing

so we take up threads that were dropped in earlier chapters. In discussing the two aspects of freedom for modern man, we have pointed out the economic conditions that make for increasing isolation and powerlessness of the individual in our era; in discussing the psychological results we have shown that this powerlessness leads either to the kind of escape that we find in the authoritarian character, or else to a compulsive conforming in the process of which the isolated individual becomes an automaton, loses his self, and yet at the same time consciously conceives of himself as free and subject only to himself.

It is important to consider how our culture fosters this tendency to conform, even though there is space for only a few outstanding examples. The suppression of spontaneous feelings, and thereby of the development of genuine individuality, starts very early, as a matter of fact with the earliest training of a child.[79] This is not to say that training must inevitably lead to suppression of spontaneity if the real aim of education is to further the inner independence and individuality of the child, its growth and integrity. The restrictions which such a kind of education may have to impose upon the growing child are only transitory measures that really support the process of growth and expansion. In our culture, however, education too often results in the elimination of spontaneity and in the substitution of original psychic acts by superimposed feelings, thoughts, and wishes. (By original I do not mean, let me repeat, that an idea has not been thought before by someone else, but that it originates in the individual, that it is the result of his own activity and in this sense is *his* thought.) To choose one illustration somewhat arbitrarily, one of the earliest suppressions of *feelings* concerns hostility and dislike. To start with, most children have a certain measure of hostility and rebelliousness as a result of their conflicts with a surrounding world that tends to block their expansiveness and to which, as the weaker opponent, they usually have to yield. It is one of the essential aims of the educational process to eliminate this antagonistic reaction. The methods are different; they vary from threats and punishments, which frighten the child, to the subtler methods of bribery or “explanations,” which confuse the child and make him give up his hostility. The child starts with giving up the expression of his feeling and eventually gives up the very feeling itself. Together with that, he is taught to suppress the awareness of hostility and insincerity in others; sometimes this is not entirely easy, since children have a capacity for noticing such negative qualities in others without being so

easily deceived by words as adults usually are. They still dislike somebody "for no good reason"—except the very good one that they feel the hostility, or insincerity, radiating from that person. This reaction is soon discouraged; it does not take long for the child to reach the "maturity" of the average adult and to lose the sense of discrimination between a decent person and a scoundrel, as long as the latter has not committed some flagrant act.

On the other hand, early in his education, the child is taught to have feelings that are not at all "his"; particularly is he taught to like people, to be uncritically friendly to them, and to smile. What education may not have accomplished is usually done by social pressure in later life. If you do not smile you are judged lacking in a "pleasing personality"—and you need to have a pleasing personality if you want to sell your services, whether as a waitress, a salesman, or a physician. Only those at the bottom of the social pyramid, who sell nothing but their physical labor, and those at the very top do not need to be particularly "pleasant." Friendliness, cheerfulness, and everything that a smile is supposed to express, become automatic responses which one turns on and off like an electric switch.[80]

To be sure, in many instances the person is aware of merely making a gesture; in most cases, however, he loses that awareness and thereby the ability to discriminate between the pseudo feeling and spontaneous friendliness.

It is not only hostility that is directly suppressed and friendliness that is killed by superimposing its counterfeit. A wide range of spontaneous emotions are suppressed and replaced by pseudo feelings. Freud has taken one such suppression and put it in the center of his whole system, namely the suppression of sex. Although I believe that the discouragement of sexual joy is not the only important suppression of spontaneous reactions but one of many, certainly its importance is not to be underrated. Its results are obvious in cases of sexual inhibitions and also in those where sex assumes a compulsive quality and is consumed like liquor or a drug, which has no particular taste but makes you forget yourself. Regardless of the one or the other effect, their suppression, because of the intensity of sexual desires, not only affects the sexual sphere but also weakens the person's courage for spontaneous expression in all other spheres.

In our society emotions in general are discouraged. While there can be no doubt that any creative thinking—as well as any other creative activity—is inseparably linked with emotion, it has become an ideal to think and to

live without emotions. To be “emotional” has become synonymous with being unsound or unbalanced. By the acceptance of this standard the individual has become greatly weakened; his thinking is impoverished and flattened. On the other hand, since emotions cannot be completely killed, they must have their existence totally apart from the intellectual side of the personality; the result is the cheap and insincere sentimentality with which movies and popular songs feed millions of emotion-starved customers.

There is one tabooed emotion that I want to mention in particular, because its suppression touches deeply on the roots of personality: the sense of tragedy. As we saw in an earlier chapter, the awareness of death and of the tragic aspect of life, whether dim or clear, is one of the basic characteristics of man. Each culture has its own way of coping with the problem of death. For those societies in which the process of individuation has progressed but little, the end of individual existence is less of a problem since the experience of individual existence itself is less developed. Death is not yet conceived as being basically different from life. Cultures in which we find a higher development of individuation have treated death according to their social and psychological structure. The Greeks put all emphasis on life and pictured death as nothing but a shadowy and dreary continuation of life. The Egyptians based their hopes on a belief in the indestructibility of the human body, at least of those whose power during life was indestructible. The Jews admitted the fact of death realistically and were able to reconcile themselves with the idea of the destruction of individual life by the vision of a state of happiness and justice ultimately to be reached by mankind in this world. Christianity has made death unreal and tried to comfort the unhappy individual by promises of a life after death. Our own era simply denies death and with it one fundamental aspect of life. Instead of allowing the awareness of death and suffering to become one of the strongest incentives for life, the basis for human solidarity, and an experience without which joy and enthusiasm lack intensity and depth, the individual is forced to repress it. But, as is always the case with repression, by being removed from sight the repressed elements do not cease to exist. Thus the fear of death lives an illegitimate existence among us. It remains alive in spite of the attempt to deny it, but being repressed it remains sterile. It is one source of the flatness of other experiences, of the restlessness pervading life, and it explains, I would venture to say, the exorbitant amount of money this nation pays for its funerals.

In the process of tabooing emotions modern psychiatry plays an ambiguous role. On the one hand its greatest representative, Freud, has broken through the fiction of the rational, purposeful character of the human mind and opened a path which allows a view into the abyss of human passions. On the other hand psychiatry, enriched by these very achievements of Freud, has made itself an instrument of the general trends in the manipulation of personality. Many psychiatrists, including psychoanalysts, have painted the picture of a "normal" personality which is never too sad, too angry, or too excited. They use words like "infantile" or "neurotic" to denounce traits or types of personalities that do not conform with the conventional pattern of a "normal" individual. This kind of influence is in a way more dangerous than the older and franker forms of name-calling. Then the individual knew at least that there was some person or some doctrine which criticized him and he could fight back. But who can fight back at "science"?

The same distortion happens to original *thinking* as happens to feelings and emotions. From the very start of education original thinking is discouraged and ready—made thoughts are put into people's heads. How this is done with young children is easy enough to see. They are filled with curiosity about the world, they want to grasp it physically as well as intellectually. They want to know the truth, since that is the safest way to orient themselves in a strange and powerful world. Instead, they are not taken seriously, and it does not matter whether this attitude takes the form of open disrespect or of the subtle condescension which is usual towards all who have no power (such as children, aged or sick people). Although this treatment by itself offers strong discouragement to independent thinking, there is a worse handicap: the insincerity—often unintentional—which is typical of the average adult's behavior toward a child. This insincerity consists partly in the fictitious picture of the world which the child is given. It is about as useful as instructions concerning life in the Arctic would be to someone who has asked how to prepare for an expedition to the Sahara Desert. Besides this general misrepresentation of the world there are the many specific lies that tend to conceal facts which, for various personal reasons, adults do not want children to know. From a bad temper, which is rationalized as justified dissatisfaction with the child's behavior, to concealment of the parents' sexual activities and their quarrels, the child is

“not supposed to know” and his inquiries meet with hostile or polite discouragement.

The child thus prepared enters school and perhaps college. I want to mention briefly some of the educational methods used today which in effect further discourage original thinking. One is the emphasis on knowledge of facts, or I should rather say on information. The pathetic superstition prevails that by knowing more and more facts one arrives at knowledge of reality. Hundreds of scattered and unrelated facts are dumped into the heads of students; their time and energy are taken up by learning more and more facts so that there is little left for thinking. To be sure, thinking without a knowledge of facts remains empty and fictitious; but “information” alone can be just as much of an obstacle to thinking as the lack of it.

Another closely related way of discouraging original thinking is to regard all truth as relative.[81] Truth is made out to be a metaphysical concept, and if anyone speaks about wanting to discover the truth he is thought backward by the “progressive” thinkers of our age. Truth is declared to be an entirely subjective matter, almost a matter of taste. Scientific endeavor must be detached from subjective factors, and its aim is to look at the world without passion and interest. The scientist has to approach facts with sterilized hands as a surgeon approaches his patient. The result of this relativism, which often presents itself by the name of empiricism or positivism or which recommends itself by its concern for the correct usage of words, is that thinking loses its essential stimulus—the wishes and interests of the person who thinks; instead it becomes a machine to register “facts.” Actually, just as thinking in general has developed out of the need for mastery of material life, so the quest for truth is rooted in the interests and needs of individuals and social groups. Without such interest the stimulus for seeking the truth would be lacking. There are always groups whose interest is furthered by truth, and their representatives have been the pioneers of human thought; there are other groups whose interests are furthered by concealing truth. Only in the latter case does interest prove harmful to the cause of truth. The problem, therefore, is not that there is *an* interest at stake, but *which kind* of interest is at stake. I might say that inasmuch as there is some longing for the truth in every human being, it is because every human being has some need for it.

This holds true in the first place with regard to a person’s orientation in the outer world, and it holds especially true for the child. As a child, every

human being passes through a state of powerlessness, and truth is one of the strongest weapons of those who have no power. But the truth is in the individual's interest not only with regard to his orientation in the outer world; his own strength depends to a great extent on his knowing the truth about himself. Illusions about oneself can become crutches useful to those who are not able to walk alone; but they increase a person's weakness. The individual's greatest strength is based on the maximum of integration of his personality, and that means also on the maximum of transparence to himself. "Know thyself" is one of the fundamental commands that aim at human strength and happiness.

In addition to the factors just mentioned there are others which actively tend to confuse whatever is left of the capacity for original thinking in the average adult. With regard to all basic questions of individual and social life, with regard to psychological, economic, political, and moral problems, a great sector of our culture has just one function—to befog the issues. One kind of smokescreen is the assertion that the problems are too complicated for the average individual to grasp. On the contrary it would seem that many of the basic issues of individual and social life are very simple, so simple, in fact, that everyone should be expected to understand them. To let them appear to be so enormously complicated that only a "specialist" can understand them, and he only in his own limited field, actually—and often intentionally—tends to discourage people from trusting their own capacity to think about those problems that really matter. The individual feels helplessly caught in a chaotic mass of data and with pathetic patience waits until the specialists have found out what to do and where to go.

The result of this kind of influence is a twofold one: one is a skepticism and cynicism towards everything which is said or printed, while the other is a childish belief in anything that a person is told with authority. This combination of cynicism and naiveté is very typical of the modern individual. Its essential result is to discourage him from doing his own thinking and deciding.

Another way of paralyzing the ability to think critically is the destruction of any kind of structuralized picture of the world. Facts lose the specific quality which they can have only as parts of a structuralized whole and retain merely an abstract, quantitative meaning; each fact is just *another* fact and all that matters is whether we know more or less. Radio, moving pictures, and newspapers have a devastating effect on this score.

The announcement of the bombing of a city and the death of hundreds of people is shamelessly followed or interrupted by an advertisement for soap or wine. The same speaker with the same suggestive, ingratiating, and authoritative voice, which he has just used to impress you with the seriousness of the political situation, impresses now upon his audience the merits of the particular brand of soap which pays for the news broadcast. Newsreels let pictures of torpedoed ships be followed by those of a fashion show. Newspapers tell us the trite thoughts or breakfast habits of a debutante with the same space and seriousness they use for reporting events of scientific or artistic importance. Because of all this we cease to be genuinely related to what we hear. We cease to be excited, our emotions and our critical judgment become hampered, and eventually our attitude to what is going on in the world assumes a quality of flatness and indifference. In the name of "freedom" life loses all structure; it is composed of many little pieces, each separate from the other and lacking any sense as a whole. The individual is left alone with these pieces like a child with a puzzle; the difference, however, is that the child knows what a house is and therefore can recognize the parts of the house in the little pieces he is playing with, whereas the adult does not see the meaning of the "whole," the pieces of which come into his hands. He is bewildered and afraid and just goes on gazing at his little meaningless pieces.

What has been said about the lack of "originality" in feeling and thinking holds true also of the act of *willing. To* recognize this is particularly difficult; modern man seems, if anything, to have too many wishes and his only problem seems to be that, although he knows what he wants, he cannot have it. All our energy is spent for the purpose of getting what we want, and most people never question the premise of this activity: that they know their true wants. They do not stop to think whether the aims they are pursuing are something they themselves want. In school they want to have good marks, as adults they want to be more and more successful, to make more money, to have more prestige, to buy a better car, to go places, and so on. Yet when they do stop to think in the midst of all this frantic activity, this question may come to their minds: "If I do get this new job, if I get this better car, if I can take this trip—what then? What is the use of it all? Is it really I who wants all this? Am I not running after some goal which is supposed to make me happy and which eludes me as soon as I have reached it?" These questions, when they arise, are frightening, for they

question the very basis on which man's whole activity is built, his knowledge of what he wants. People tend, therefore, to get rid as soon as possible of these disturbing thoughts. They feel that they have been bothered by these questions because they were tired or depressed—and they go on in the pursuit of the aims which they believe are their own.

Yet all this bespeaks a dim realization of the truth—the truth that modern man lives under the illusion that he knows what he wants, while he actually wants what he is *supposed* to want. In order to accept this it is necessary to realize that to know what one really wants is not comparatively easy, as most people think, but one of the most difficult problems any human being has to solve. It is a task we frantically try to avoid by accepting ready-made goals as though they were our own. Modern man is ready to take great risks when he tries to achieve the aims which are supposed to be "his"; but he is deeply afraid of taking the risk and the responsibility of giving himself his own aims. Intense activity is often mistaken for evidence of self determined action, although we know that it may well be no more spontaneous than the behavior of an actor or a person hypnotized. When the general plot of the play is handed out, each actor can act vigorously the role he is assigned and even make up his lines and certain details of the action by himself. Yet he is only playing a role that has been handed over to him.

The particular difficulty in recognizing to what extent our wishes—and our thoughts and feelings as well—are not really our own but put into us from the outside, is closely linked up with the problem of authority and freedom. In the course of modern history the authority of the Church has been replaced by that of the State, that of the State by that of conscience, and in our era, the latter has been replaced by the anonymous authority of common sense and public opinion as instruments of conformity. Because we have freed ourselves of the older overt forms of authority, we do not see that we have become the prey of a new kind of authority. We have become automatons who live under the illusion of being self-willing individuals. This illusion helps the individual to remain unaware of his insecurity, but this is all the help such an illusion can give. Basically the self of the individual is weakened, so that he feels powerless and extremely insecure. He lives in a world to which he has lost genuine relatedness and in which everybody and everything has become instrumentalized, where he has become a part of the machine that his hands have built. He thinks, feels, and

wills what he believes he is supposed to think, feel, and will; in this very process he loses his self upon which all genuine security of a free individual must be built.

The loss of the self has increased the necessity to conform, for it results in a profound doubt of one's own identity. If I am nothing but what I believe I am supposed to be—who am "I"? We have seen how the doubt about one's own self started with the breakdown of the medieval order in which the individual had had an unquestionable place in a fixed order. The identity of the individual has been a major problem of modern philosophy since Descartes. Today we take for granted that we are we. Yet the doubt about ourselves still exists, or has even grown. In his plays Pirandello has given expression to this feeling of modern man. He starts with the question: Who am I? What proof have I for my own identity other than the continuation of my physical self? His answer is not like Descartes'—the affirmation of the individual self—but its denial: I have no identity, there is no self excepting the one which is the reflex of what others expect me to be: I am "as you desire me."

This loss of identity then makes it still more imperative to conform; it means that one can be sure of oneself only if one lives up to the expectations of others. If we do not live up to this picture we not only risk disapproval and increased isolation, but we risk losing the identity of our personality, which means jeopardizing sanity.

By conforming with the expectations of others, by not being different, these doubts about one's own identity are silenced and a certain security is gained. However, the price paid is high. Giving up spontaneity and individuality results in a thwarting of life. Psychologically the automaton, while being alive biologically, is dead emotionally and mentally While he goes through the motions of living, his life runs through his hands like sand. Behind a front of satisfaction and optimism modern man is deeply unhappy; as a matter of fact, he is on the verge of desperation. He desperately clings to the notion of individuality; he wants to be "different," and he has no greater recommendation of anything than that "it is different." We are informed of the individual name of the railroad clerk we buy our tickets from; handbags, playing cards, and portable radios are "personalized," by having the initials of the owner put on them. All this indicates the hunger for "difference" and yet these are almost the last vestiges of individuality that are left. Modern man is starved for life. But since, being an automaton,

he cannot experience life in the sense of spontaneous activity he takes as surrogate any kind of excitement and thrill: the thrill of drinking, of sports, of vicariously living the excitements of fictitious persons on the screen.

What then is the meaning of freedom for modern man?

He has become free from the external bonds that would prevent him from doing and thinking as he sees fit. He would be free to act according to his own will, if he knew what he wanted, thought, and felt. But he does not know. He conforms to anonymous authorities and adopts a self which is not his. The more he does this, the more powerless he feels, the more he is forced to conform. In spite of a veneer of optimism and initiative, modern man is overcome by a profound feeling of powerlessness which makes him gaze toward approaching catastrophes as though he were paralyzed.

Looked at superficially, people appear to function well enough in economic and social life; yet it would be dangerous to overlook the deep-seated unhappiness behind that comforting veneer. If life loses its meaning because it is not lived, man becomes desperate. People do not die quietly from physical starvation; they do not die quietly from psychic starvation either. If we look only at the economic needs as far as the “normal” person is concerned, if we do not see the unconscious suffering of the average automatized person, then we fail to see the danger that threatens our culture from its human basis: the readiness to accept any ideology and any leader, if only he promises excitement and offers a political structure and symbols which allegedly give meaning and order to an individual’s life. The despair of the human automaton is fertile soil for the political purposes of Fascism.

2. Freedom and Spontaneity

So far this book has dealt with one aspect of freedom: the powerlessness and insecurity of the isolated individual in modern society who has become free from all bonds that once gave meaning and security to life. We have seen that the individual cannot bear this isolation; as an isolated being he is utterly helpless in comparison with the world outside and therefore deeply afraid of it; and because of his isolation, the unity of the world has broken down for him and he has lost any point of orientation. He is therefore overcome by doubts concerning himself, the meaning of life, and eventually any principle according to which he can direct his actions. Both helplessness and doubt paralyze life, and in order to live man tries to escape

from freedom, negative freedom. He is driven into new bondage. This bondage is different from the primary bonds, from which, though dominated by authorities or the social group, he was not entirely separated. The escape does not restore his lost security, but only helps him to forget his self as a separate entity. He finds new and fragile security at the expense of sacrificing the integrity of his individual self. He chooses to lose his self since he cannot bear to be alone. Thus freedom—as freedom from—leads into new bondage.

Does our analysis lend itself to the conclusion that there is an inevitable circle that leads from freedom into new dependence? Does freedom from all primary ties make the individual so alone and isolated that inevitably he must escape into new bondage? Are *independence* and freedom identical with *isolation* and fear? Or is there a state of positive freedom in which the individual exists as an independent self and yet is not isolated but united with the world, with other men, and nature?

We believe that there is a positive answer, that the process of growing freedom does not constitute a vicious circle, and that man can be free and yet not alone, critical and yet not filled with doubts, independent and yet an integral part of mankind. This freedom man can attain by the realization of his self, by being himself. What is realization of the self? Idealistic philosophers have believed that self-realization can be achieved by intellectual insight alone. They have insisted upon splitting human personality, so that man's nature may be suppressed and guarded by his reason. The result of this split, however, has been that not only the emotional life of man but also his intellectual faculties have been crippled. Reason, by becoming a guard set to watch its prisoner, nature, has become a prisoner itself; and thus both sides of human personality, reason and emotion, were crippled. We believe that the realization of the self is accomplished not only by an act of thinking but also by the realization of man's total personality, by the active expression of his emotional and intellectual potentialities. These potentialities are present in everybody; they become real only to the extent to which they are expressed. In other words, positive *freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality*.

We approach here one of the most difficult problems of psychology: the problem of spontaneity. An attempt to discuss this problem adequately would require another volume. However, on the basis of what we have said

so far, it is possible to arrive at an understanding of the essential quality of spontaneous activity by means of contrast. Spontaneous activity is not compulsive activity, to which the individual is driven by his isolation and powerlessness; it is not the activity of the automaton, which is the uncritical adoption of patterns suggested from the outside. Spontaneous activity is free activity of the self and implies, psychologically, what the Latin root of the word, sponte, means literally: of one's free will. By activity we do not mean "doing something," but the quality of creative activity that can operate in one's emotional, intellectual, and sensuous experiences and in one's will as well. One premise for this spontaneity is the acceptance of the total personality and the elimination of the split between "reason" and "nature"; for only if man does not repress essential parts of his self, only if he has become transparent to himself, and only if the different spheres of life have reached a fundamental integration, is spontaneous activity possible.

While spontaneity is a relatively rare phenomenon in our culture, we are not entirely devoid of it. In order to help in the understanding of this point, I should like to remind the reader of some instances where we all catch a glimpse of spontaneity.

In the first place, we know of individuals who are—or have been—spontaneous, whose thinking, feeling, and acting were the expression of their selves and not of an automaton. These individuals are mostly known to us as artists. As a matter of fact, the artist can be defined as an individual who can express himself spontaneously. If this were the definition of an artist—Balzac defined him just in that way—then certain philosophers and scientists have to be called artists too, while others are as different from them as an old-fashioned photographer from a creative painter. There are other individuals who, though lacking the ability—or perhaps merely the training—for expressing themselves in an objective medium as the artist does, possess the same spontaneity. The position of the artist is vulnerable, though, for it is really only the successful artist whose individuality or spontaneity is respected; if he does not succeed in selling the art, he remains to his contemporaries a crank, a "neurotic." The artist in this matter is in a similar position to that of the revolutionary throughout history. The successful revolutionary is a statesman, the unsuccessful one a criminal.

Small children offer another instance of spontaneity. They have an ability to feel and think that which is really *theirs;* this spontaneity shows in

what they say and think, in the feelings that are expressed in their faces. If one asks what makes for the attraction small children have for most people I believe that, aside from sentimental and conventional reasons, the answer must be that it is this very quality of spontaneity. It appeals profoundly to everyone who is not so dead himself that he has lost the ability to perceive it. As a matter of fact, there is nothing more attractive and convincing than spontaneity whether it is to be found in a child, in an artist, or in those individuals who cannot thus be grouped according to age or profession.

Most of us can observe at least moments of our own spontaneity which are at the same time moments of genuine happiness. Whether it be the fresh and spontaneous perception of a landscape, or the dawning of some truth as the result of our thinking, or a sensuous pleasure that is not stereotyped, or the welling up of love for another person—in these moments we all know what a spontaneous act is and may have some vision of what human life could be if these experiences were not such rare and uncultivated occurrences.

Why is spontaneous activity the answer to the problem of freedom? We have said that negative freedom by itself makes the individual an isolated being, whose relationship to the world is distant and distrustful and whose self is weak and constantly threatened. Spontaneous activity is the one way in which man can overcome the terror of aloneness without sacrificing the integrity of his self; for in the spontaneous realization of the self man unites himself anew with the world—with man, nature, and himself. Love is the foremost component of such spontaneity; not love as the dissolution of the self in another person, not love as the possession of another person, but love as spontaneous affirmation of others, as the union of the individual with others on the basis of the preservation of the individual self. The dynamic quality of love lies in this very polarity: that it springs from the need of overcoming separateness, that it leads to oneness —and yet that individuality is not eliminated. Work is the other component; not work as a compulsive activity in order to escape aloneness, not work as a relationship to nature which is partly one of dominating her, partly one of worship of and enslavement by the very products of man’s hands, but work as creation in which man becomes one with nature in the act of creation. What holds true of love and work holds true of all spontaneous action, whether it be the realization of sensuous pleasure or participation in the political life of the community. It affirms the individuality of the self and at

the same time it unites the self with man and nature. The basic dichotomy that is inherent in freedom—the birth of individuality and the pain of aloneness—is dissolved on a higher plane by man's spontaneous action.

In all spontaneous activity the individual embraces the world. Not only does his individual self remain intact; it becomes stronger and more solidified. *For the self is as strong as it is active.* There is no genuine strength in possession as such, neither of material property nor of mental qualities like emotions or thoughts. There is also no strength in use and manipulation of objects; what we use is not ours simply because we use it. Ours is only that to which we are genuinely related by our creative activity, be it a person or an inanimate object. Only those qualities that result from our spontaneous activity give strength to the self and thereby form the basis of its integrity. The inability to act spontaneously, to express what one genuinely feels and thinks, and the resulting necessity to present a pseudo self to others and oneself, are the root of the feeling of inferiority and weakness. Whether or not we are aware of it, there is nothing of which we are more ashamed than of not being ourselves, and there is nothing that gives us greater pride and happiness than to think, to feel, and to say what is ours.

This implies that what matters is the activity as such, the process and not the result. In our culture the emphasis is just the reverse. We produce not for a concrete satisfaction but for the abstract purpose of selling our commodity; we feel that we can acquire everything material or immaterial by buying it, and thus things become ours independently of any creative effort of our own in relation to them. In the same way we regard our personal qualities and the result of our efforts as commodities that can be sold for money, prestige, and power. The emphasis thus shifts from the present satisfaction of creative activity to the value of the finished product. Thereby man misses the only satisfaction that can give him real happiness —the experience of the activity of the present moment—and chases after a phantom that leaves him disappointed as soon as he believes he has caught it—the illusory happiness called success.

If the individual realizes his self by spontaneous activity and thus relates himself to the world, he ceases to be an isolated atom; he and the world become part of one structuralized whole; he has his rightful place, and thereby his doubt concerning himself and the meaning of life disappears. This doubt sprang from his separateness and from the thwarting

of life; when he can live, neither compulsively nor automatically but spontaneously, the doubt disappears. He is aware of himself as an active and creative individual and recognizes that *there is only one meaning of life: the act of living itself.*

If the individual overcomes the basic doubt concerning himself and his place in life, if he is related to the world by embracing it in the act of spontaneous living, he gains strength as an individual and he gains security. This security, however, differs from the security that characterizes the pre-individualist state in the same way in which the new relatedness to the world differs from that of the primary ties. The new security is not rooted in the protection which the individual has from a higher power outside of himself; neither is it a security in which the tragic quality of life is eliminated. The new security is dynamic; it is not based on protection, but on man's spontaneous activity. It is the security acquired each moment by man's spontaneous activity. It is the security that only freedom can give, that needs no illusions because it has eliminated those conditions that necessitate illusions.

Positive freedom as the realization of the self implies the full affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual. Men are born equal but they are also born different. The basis of this difference is the inherited equipment, physiological and mental, with which they start life, to which is added the particular constellation of circumstances and experiences that they meet with. This individual basis of the personality is as little identical with any other as two organisms are ever identical physically. The genuine growth of the self is always a growth on this particular basis; it is an organic growth, the unfolding of a nucleus that is peculiar for this one person and only for him. The development of the automaton, in contrast, is not an organic growth. The growth of the basis of the self is blocked and a pseudo self is superimposed upon this self, which is—as we have seen—essentially the incorporation of extraneous patterns of thinking and feeling. Organic growth is possible only under the condition of supreme respect for the peculiarity of the self of other persons as well as of our own self. This respect for and cultivation of the uniqueness of the self is the most valuable achievement of human culture and it is this very achievement that is in danger today.

The uniqueness of the self in no way contradicts the principle of equality. The thesis that men are born equal implies that they all share the

same fundamental human qualities, that they share the basic fate of human beings, that they all have the same inalienable claim on freedom and happiness. It furthermore means that their relationship is one of solidarity, not one of domination-submission. What the concept of equality does not mean is that all men are alike. Such a concept of equality is derived from the role that the individual plays in his economic activities today. In the relation between the man who buys and the one who sells, the concrete differences of personality are eliminated. In this situation only one thing matters, that the one has something to sell and the other has money to buy it. In economic life one man is not different from another; as real persons they are, and the cultivation of their uniqueness is the essence of individuality.

Positive freedom also implies the principle that there is no higher power than this unique individual self, that man is the center and purpose of his life; that the growth and realization of man's individuality is an end that can never be subordinated to purposes which are supposed to have greater dignity. This interpretation may arouse serious objections. Does it not postulate unbridled egotism? Is it not the negation of the idea of sacrifice for an ideal? Would its acceptance not lead to anarchy? These questions have actually already been answered, partly explicitly, partly implicitly, during our previous discussion. However, they are too important for us not to make another attempt to clarify the answers and to avoid misunderstanding.

To say that man should not be subject to anything higher than himself does not deny the dignity of ideals. On the contrary, it is the strongest affirmation of ideals. It forces us, however, to a critical analysis of what an ideal is. One is generally apt today to assume that an ideal is any aim whose achievement does not imply material gain, anything for which a person is ready to sacrifice egotistical ends. This is a purely psychological—and for that matter relativistic—concept of an ideal. From this subjectivist viewpoint a Fascist, who is driven by the desire to subordinate himself to a higher power and at the same time to overpower other people, has an ideal just as much as the man who fights for human equality and freedom. On this basis the problem of ideals can never be solved.

We must recognize the difference between genuine and fictitious ideals, which is just as fundamental a difference as that between truth and falsehood. All genuine ideals have one thing in common: they express the

desire for something which is not yet accomplished but which is desirable for the purposes of the growth and happiness of the individual.[82] We may not always know what serves this end, we may disagree about the function of this or that ideal in terms of human development, but this is no reason for a relativism which says that we cannot know what furthers life or what blocks it. We are not always sure which food is healthy and which is not, yet we do not conclude that we have no way whatsoever of recognizing poison. In the same way we can know, if we want to, what is poisonous for mental life. We know that poverty, intimidation, isolation, are directed against life; that everything that serves freedom and furthers the courage and strength to be oneself is for life. What is good or bad for man is not a metaphysical question, but an empirical one that can be answered on the basis of an analysis of man's nature and the effect which certain conditions have on him.

But what about "ideals" like those of the Fascists which are definitely directed against life? How can we understand the fact that men are following these false ideals as fervently as others are following true ideals? The answer to this question is provided by certain psychological considerations. The phenomenon of masochism shows us that men can be drawn to the experiencing of suffering or submission. There is no doubt that suffering, submission, or suicide is the antithesis of positive aims of living. Yet these aims can be subjectively experienced as gratifying and attractive. This attraction to what is harmful in life is the phenomenon which more than any other deserves the name of a pathological perversion. Many psychologists have assumed that the experience of pleasure and the avoidance of pain is the only legitimate principle guiding human action; but dynamic psychology can show that the subjective experience of pleasure is not a sufficient criterion for the value of certain behavior in terms of human happiness. The analysis of masochistic phenomena is a case in point. Such analysis shows that the sensation of pleasure can be the result of a pathological perversion and proves as little about the objective meaning of the experience as the sweet taste of a poison would prove about its function for the organism.[83] We thus come to define a genuine ideal as any aim which furthers the growth, freedom, and happiness of the self, and to define as fictitious ideals those compulsive and irrational aims which subjectively are attractive experiences (like the drive for submission), but which actually are harmful to life. Once we accept this definition, it follows that a genuine

ideal is not some veiled force superior to the individual, but that it is the articulate expression of utmost affirmation of the self. Any ideal which is in contrast to such affirmation proves by this very fact that it is not an ideal but a pathological aim.

From here we come to another question, that of sacrifice. Does our definition of freedom as non-submission to any higher power exclude sacrifices, including the sacrifice of one's life?

This is a particularly important question today, when Fascism proclaims self-sacrifice as the highest virtue and impresses many people with its idealistic character. The answer to this question follows logically from what has been said so far. There are two entirely different types of sacrifice. It is one of the tragic facts of life that the demands of our physical self and the aims of our mental self can conflict; that actually we may have to sacrifice our physical self in order to assert the integrity of our spiritual self. This sacrifice will never lose its tragic quality. Death is never sweet, not even if it is suffered for the highest ideal. It remains unspeakably bitter, and still it can be the utmost assertion of our individuality. Such sacrifice is fundamentally different from the "sacrifice" which Fascism preaches. There, sacrifice is not the highest price man may have to pay to assert his self, but it is an aim in itself. This masochistic sacrifice sees the fulfillment of life in its very negation, in the annihilation of the self. It is only the supreme expression of what Fascism aims at in all its ramifications—the annihilation of the individual self and its utter submission to a higher power. It is the perversion of true sacrifice as much as suicide is the utmost perversion of life. True sacrifice presupposes an uncompromising wish for spiritual integrity. The sacrifice of those who have lost it only covers up their moral bankruptcy.

One last objection is to be met: If individuals are allowed to act freely in the sense of spontaneity, if they acknowledge no higher authority than themselves, will *anarchy* be the inevitable result? In so far as the word anarchy stands for heedless egotism and destructiveness, the determining factor depends upon one's understanding of human nature. I can only refer to what has been pointed out in the chapter dealing with mechanisms of escape: that man is neither good nor bad; that life has an inherent tendency to grow, to expand, to express potentialities; that if life is thwarted, if the individual is isolated and overcome by doubt or a feeling of aloneness and powerlessness, then he is driven to destructiveness and craving for power or

submission. If human freedom is established as *freedom to*, if man can realize his self fully and uncompromisingly, the fundamental cause for his asocial drives will have disappeared and only a sick and abnormal individual will be dangerous. This freedom has never been realized in the history of mankind, yet it has been an ideal to which mankind has stuck even if it was often expressed in abstruse and irrational forms. There is no reason to wonder why the record of history shows so much cruelty and destructiveness. If there is anything to be surprised at—and encouraged by—I believe it is the fact that the human race, in spite of all that has happened to men, has retained—and actually developed—such qualities of dignity, courage, decency, and kindness as we find them throughout history and in countless individuals today.

If by anarchy one means that the individual does not acknowledge any kind of authority, the answer is to be found in what has been said about the difference between rational and irrational authority. Rational authority—like a genuine ideal—represents the aims of growth and expansion of the individual. It is, therefore, in principle never in conflict with the individual and his real, and not his pathological, aims.

It has been the thesis of this book that freedom has a twofold meaning for modern man: that he has been freed from traditional authorities and has become an "individual," but that at the same time he has become isolated, powerless, and an instrument of purposes outside of himself, alienated from himself and others; furthermore, that this state undermines his self, weakens and frightens him, and makes him ready for submission to new kinds of bondage. Positive freedom on the other hand is identical with the full realization of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously. Freedom has reached a critical point where, driven by the logic of its own dynamism, it threatens to change into its opposite. The future of democracy depends on the realization of the individualism that has been the ideological aim of modern thought since the Renaissance. The cultural and political crisis of our day is not due to the fact that there is too much individualism but that what we believe to be individualism has become an empty shell. The victory of freedom is possible only if democracy develops into a society in which the individual, his growth and happiness, is the aim and purpose of culture, in which life does not need any justification in success or anything else, and in which the individual is not subordinated to or manipulated by any power outside of

himself, be it the State or the economic machine; finally, a society in which his conscience and ideals are not the internalization of external demands, but are really his and express the aims that result from the peculiarity of his self. These aims could not be fully realized in any previous period of modern history; they had to remain largely ideological aims, because the material basis for the development of genuine individualism was lacking. Capitalism has created this premise. The problem of production is solved—in principle at least—and we can visualize a future of abundance, in which the fight for economic privileges is no longer necessitated by economic scarcity. The problem we are confronted with today is that of the organization of social and economic forces, so that man—as a member of organized society—may become the master of these forces and cease to be their slave.

I have stressed the psychological side of freedom, but I have also tried to show that the psychological problem cannot be separated from the material basis of human existence, from the economic, social, and political structure of society. It follows from this premise that the realization of positive freedom and individualism is also bound up with economic and social changes that will permit the individual to become free in terms of the realization of his self. It is not the aim of this book to deal with the economic problems resulting from that premise or to give a picture of economic plans for the future. But I should not like to leave any doubt concerning the direction in which I believe the solution to lie.

In the first place this must be said: We cannot afford to lose any of the fundamental achievements of modern democracy—either the fundamental one of representative government, that is, government elected by the people and responsible to the people, or any of the rights which the Bill of Rights guarantees to every citizen. Nor can we compromise the newer democratic principle that no one shall be allowed to starve, that society is responsible for all its members, that no one shall be frightened into submission and lose his human pride through fear of unemployment and starvation. These basic achievements must not only be preserved; they must be fortified and expanded.

In spite of the fact that this measure of democracy has been realized—though far from completely—it is not enough. Progress for democracy lies in enhancing the actual freedom, initiative, and spontaneity of the

individual, not only in certain private and spiritual matters, but above all in the activity fundamental to every man's existence, his work.

What are the general conditions for that? The irrational and planless character of society must be replaced by a planned economy that represents the planned and concerted effort of society as such. Society must master the social problem as rationally as it has mastered nature. One condition for this is the elimination of the secret rule of those who, though few in number, wield great economic power without any responsibility to those whose fate depends on their decisions. We may call this new order by the name of democratic socialism but the name does not matter; all that matters is that we establish a rational economic system serving the purposes of the people. Today the vast majority of the people not only have no control over the whole of the economic machine, but they have little chance to develop genuine initiative and spontaneity at the particular job they are doing. They are "employed," and nothing more is expected from them than that they do what they are told. Only in a planned economy in which the whole nation has rationally mastered the economic and social forces can the individual share responsibility and use creative intelligence in his work. All that matters is that the opportunity for genuine activity be restored to the individual; that the purposes of society and of his own become identical, not ideologically but in reality; and that he apply his effort and reason actively to the work he is doing, as something for which he can feel responsible because it has meaning and purpose in terms of his human ends. We must replace manipulation of men by active and intelligent co-operation, and expand the principle of government of the people, by the people, for the people, from the formal political to the economic sphere.

The question of whether an economic and political system furthers the cause of human freedom cannot be answered in political and economic terms alone. The only criterion for the realization of freedom is whether or not the individual actively participates in determining his life and that of society, and this not only by the formal act of voting but in his daily activity, in his work, and in his relations to others. Modern political democracy, if it restricts itself to the purely political sphere, cannot sufficiently counteract the results of the economic insignificance of the average individual. But purely economic concepts like socialization of the means of production are not sufficient either. I am not thinking here so much of the deceitful usage of the word *socialism* as it has been applied—

for reasons of tactical expediency—in National Socialism. I have in mind Russia where *socialism* has become a deceptive word; for although socialization of the means of production has taken place, actually a powerful bureaucracy manipulates the vast mass of the population; this necessarily prevents the development of freedom and individualism, even if government control may be effective in the economic interest of the majority of the people.

Never have words been more misused in order to conceal the truth than today. Betrayal of allies is called appeasement, military aggression is camouflaged as defense against attack, the conquest of small nations goes by the name of a pact of friendship, and the brutal suppression of the whole population is perpetrated in the name of National Socialism. The words *democracy, freedom,* and *individualism* become objects of this abuse too. There is one way to define the real meaning of the difference between democracy and Fascism. Democracy is a system that creates the economic, political, and cultural conditions for the full development of the individual. Fascism is a system that, regardless under which name, makes the individual subordinate to extraneous purposes and weakens the development of genuine individuality.

Obviously, one of the greatest difficulties in the establishment of the conditions for the realization of democracy lies in the contradiction between a planned economy and the active co-operation of each individual. A planned economy of the scope of any big industrial system requires a great deal of centralization and, as a consequence, a bureaucracy to administer this centralized machine. On the other hand, the active control and co-operation by each individual and by the smallest units of the whole system requires a great amount of decentralization. Unless planning from the top is blended with active participation from below, unless the stream of social life continuously flows from below upwards, a planned economy will lead to renewed manipulation of the people. To solve this problem of combining centralization with decentralization is one of the major tasks of society. But it is certainly no less soluble than the technical problems we have already solved and which have brought us an almost complete mastery over nature. It is to be solved, however, only if we clearly recognize the necessity of doing so and if we have faith in the people, in their capacity to take care of their real interests as human beings.

In a way it is again the problem of individual initiative with which we are confronted. Individual initiative was one of the great stimuli both of the economic system and also of personal development under liberal capitalism. But there are two qualifications: it developed only selected qualities of man, his will and rationality, while leaving him otherwise subordinate to economic goals. It was a principle that functioned best in a highly individualized and competitive phase of capitalism which had room for countless independent economic units. Today this space has narrowed down. Only a small number can exercise individual initiative. If we want to realize this principle today and enlarge it so that the whole personality becomes free, it will be possible only on the basis of the rational and concerted effort of a society as a whole, and by an amount of decentralization which can guarantee real, genuine, active co-operation and control by the smallest units of the system.

Only if man masters society and subordinates the economic machine to the purposes of human happiness and only if he actively participates in the social process, can he overcome what now drives him into despair—his aloneness and his feeling of powerlessness. Man does not suffer so much from poverty today as he suffers from the fact that he has become a cog in a large machine, an automaton, that his life has become empty and lost its meaning. The victory over all kinds of authoritarian systems will be possible only if democracy does not retreat but takes the offensive and proceeds to realize what has been its aim in the minds of those who fought for freedom throughout the last centuries. It will triumph over the forces of nihilism only if it can imbue people with a faith that is the strongest the human mind is capable of, the faith in life and in truth, and in freedom as the active and spontaneous realization of the individual self.

Appendix

Character and the Social Process

Throughout this book we have dealt with the interrelation of socioeconomic, psychological, and ideological factors by analyzing certain historical periods like the age of the Reformation and the contemporary era. For those readers who are interested in the theoretical problems involved in such analysis I shall try, in this appendix, to discuss briefly the general theoretical basis on which the concrete analysis is founded.

In studying the psychological reactions of a social group we deal with the character structure of the members of the group, that is, of individual persons; we are interested, however, not in the peculiarities by which these persons differ from each other, but in that part of their character structure that is common to most members of the group. We can call this character the social character. The social character necessarily is less specific than the individual character. In describing the latter we deal with the whole of the traits which in their particular configuration form the personality structure of this or that individual. The social character comprises only a selection of traits, *the essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of a group which has developed as the result of the basic experiences and mode of life common to that group.* Although there will be always "deviants" with a totally different character structure, the character structure of most members of the group are variations of this nucleus, brought about by the accidental factors of birth and life experience as they differ from one individual to another. If we want to understand one individual most fully, these differentiating elements are of the greatest importance. However, if we want to understand how human energy is channeled and operates as a productive force in a given social order, then the social character deserves our main interest.

The concept of social character is a key concept for the understanding of the social process. Character in the dynamic sense of analytic psychology

is the specific form in which human energy is shaped by the dynamic adaptation of human needs to the particular mode of existence of a given society. Character in its turn determines the thinking, feeling, and acting of individuals. To see this is somewhat difficult with regard to our thoughts, since we all tend to share the conventional belief that thinking is an exclusively intellectual act and independent of the psychological structure of the personality. This is not so, however, and the less so the more our thoughts deal with ethical, philosophical, political, psychological or social problems rather than with the empirical manipulation of concrete objects. Such thoughts, aside from the purely logical elements that are involved in the act of thinking, are greatly determined by the personality structure of the person who thinks. This holds true for the whole of a doctrine or of a theoretical system as well as for a single concept, like love, justice, equality, sacrifice. Each such concept and each doctrine has an emotional matrix and this matrix is rooted in the character structure of the individual.

We have given many illustrations of this in the foregoing chapters. With regard to doctrines we have tried to show the emotional roots of early Protestantism and modern authoritarianism. With regard to single concepts we have shown that for the sado-masochistic character, for example, love means symbiotic dependence, not mutual affirmation and union on the basis of equality; sacrifice means the utmost subordination of the individual self to something higher, not assertion of one's mental and moral self; difference means difference in power, not the realization of individuality on the basis of equality; justice means that everybody should get what he deserves, not that the individual has an unconditional claim to the realization of inherent and inalienable rights; courage is the readiness to submit and to endure suffering, not the utmost assertion of individuality against power. Although the word which two people of different personality use when they speak of love, for instance, is the same, the meaning of the word is entirely different according to their character structure. As a matter of fact, much intellectual confusion could be avoided by correct psychological analysis of the meaning of these concepts, since any attempt at a purely logical classification must necessarily fail.

The fact that ideas have an emotional matrix is of the utmost importance because it is the key to the understanding of the spirit of a culture. Different societies or classes within a society have a specific character, and on its basis different ideas develop and become powerful.

Thus, for instance, the idea of work and success as the main aims of life were able to become powerful and appealing to modern man on the basis of his aloneness and doubt; but propaganda for the idea of ceaseless effort and striving for success addressed to the Pueblo Indians or to Mexican peasants would fall completely flat. These people with a different kind of character structure would hardly understand what a person setting forth such aims was talking about even if they understood his language. In the same way, Hitler and that part of the German population which has the same character structure quite sincerely feel that anybody who thinks that wars can be abolished is either a complete fool or a plain liar. On the basis of their social character, to them life without suffering and disaster is as little comprehensible as freedom and equality.

Ideas often are consciously accepted by certain groups, which, on account of the peculiarities of their social character, are not really touched by them; such ideas remain a stock of conscious convictions, but people fail to act according to them in a critical hour. An example of this is shown in the German labor movement at the time of the victory of Nazism. The vast majority of German workers before Hitler's coming into power voted for the Socialist or Communist parties and believed in the ideas of those parties; that is, the *range* of these ideas among the working class was extremely wide. The *weight* of these ideas, however, was in no proportion to their range. The onslaught of Nazism did not meet with political opponents, the majority of whom were ready to fight for their ideas. Many of the adherents of the leftist parties, although they believed in their party programs as long as the parties had authority, were ready to resign when the hour of crisis arrived. A close analysis of the character structure of German workers can show one reason—certainly not the only one—for this phenomenon. A great number of them were of a personality type that has many of the traits of what we have described as the authoritarian character. They had a deep-seated respect and longing for established authority. The emphasis of socialism on individual independence versus authority, on solidarity versus individualistic seclusion, was not what many of these workers really wanted on the basis of their personality structure. One mistake of the radical leaders was to estimate the strength of their parties only on the basis of the range which these ideas had, and to overlook their lack of weight.

In contrast to this picture, our analysis of Protestant and Calvinist doctrines has shown that those ideas were powerful forces within the adherents of the new religion, because they appealed to needs and anxieties that were present in the character structure of the people to whom they were addressed. In other words, *ideas can become powerful forces, but only to the extent to which they are answers to specific human needs prominent in a given social character.*

Not only thinking and feeling are determined by man's character structure but also his actions. It is Freud's achievement to have shown this, even if his theoretical frame of reference is incorrect. The determinations of activity by the dominant trends of a person's character structure are obvious in the case of neurotics. It is easy to understand that the compulsion to count the windows of houses and the number of stones on the pavement is an activity that is rooted in certain drives of the compulsive character. But the actions of a normal person appear to be determined only by rational considerations and the necessities of reality. However, with the new tools of observation that psychoanalysis offers, we can recognize that so-called rational behavior is largely determined by the character structure. In our discussion of the meaning of work for modern man we have dealt with an illustration of this point. We saw that the intense desire for unceasing activity was rooted in aloneness and anxiety. This compulsion to work differed from the attitude toward work in other cultures, where people worked as much as it was necessary but where they were not driven by additional forces within their own character structure. Since all normal persons today have about the same impulse to work and, furthermore, since this intensity of work is necessary if they want to live at all, one easily overlooks the irrational component in this trait.

We have now to ask what function character serves for the individual and for society. As to the former the answer is not difficult. If an individual's character more or less closely conforms with the social character, the dominant drives in his personality lead him to do what is necessary and desirable under the specific social conditions of his culture. Thus, for instance, if he has a passionate drive to save and an abhorrence of spending money for any luxury, he will be greatly helped by this drive—supposing he is a small shopkeeper who needs to save and to be thrifty if he wants to survive. Besides this economic function, character traits have a purely psychological one which is no less important. The person with

whom saving is a desire springing from his personality gains also a profound psychological satisfaction in being able to act accordingly; that is, he is not only benefited practically when he saves, but he also feels satisfied psychologically. One can easily convince oneself of this if one observes, for instance, a woman of the lower middle class shopping in the market and being as happy about two cents saved as another person of a different character may be about the enjoyment of some sensuous pleasure. This psychological satisfaction occurs not only if a person acts in accordance with the demands springing from his character structure but also when he reads or listens to ideas that appeal to him for the same reason. For the authoritarian character an ideology that describes nature as the powerful force to which we have to submit, or a speech which indulges in sadistic descriptions of political occurrences, has a profound attraction and the act of reading or listening results in psychological satisfaction. To sum up: the subjective function of character for the normal person is to *lead him to act according to what is necessary for him from a practical standpoint and also to give him satisfaction from his activity psychologically.*

If we look at social character from the standpoint of its function in the social process, we have to start with the statement that has been made with regard to its function for the individual: that by adapting himself to social conditions man develops those traits that make him *desire* to act as he *has* to act. If the character of the majority of people in a given society—that is, the social character—is thus adapted to the objective tasks the individual has to perform in this society, the energies of people are molded in ways that make them into productive forces that are indispensable for the functioning of that society. Let us take up once more the example of work. Our modern industrial system requires that most of our energy be channeled in the direction of work. Were it only that people worked because of external necessities, much friction between what they ought to do and what they would like to do would arise and lessen their efficiency. However, by the dynamic adaptation of character to social requirements, human energy instead of causing friction is shaped into such forms as to become an incentive to act according to the particular economic necessities. Thus modern man, instead of having to be forced to work as hard as he does, is driven by the inner compulsion to work which we have attempted to analyze in its psychological significance. Or, instead of obeying overt authorities, he has built up an inner authority—conscience and duty—which

operates more effectively in controlling him than any external authority could ever do. In other words, the social character internalizes external necessities and thus harnesses human energy for the task of a given economic and social system.

As we have seen, once certain needs have developed in a character structure, any behavior in line with these needs is at the same time satisfactory psychologically and practical from the standpoint of material success. As long as a society offers the individual those two satisfactions simultaneously, we have a situation where the psychological forces are cementing the social structure. Sooner or later, however, a lag arises. The traditional character structure still exists while new economic conditions have arisen, for which the traditional character traits are no longer useful. People tend to act according to their character structure, but either these actions are actual handicaps in their economic pursuits or there is not enough opportunity for them to find positions that allow them to act according to their "nature." An illustration of what we have in mind is the character structure of the old middle classes, particularly in countries with a rigid class stratification like Germany. The old middle class virtues—frugality, thrift, cautiousness, suspiciousness—were of diminishing value in modern business in comparison with new virtues, such as initiative, a readiness to take risks, aggressiveness, and so on. Even inasmuch as these old virtues were still an asset—as with the small shopkeeper—the range of possibilities for such business was so narrowed down that only a minority of the sons of the old middle class could "use" their character traits successfully in their economic pursuits. While by their upbringing they had developed character traits that once were adapted to the social situation of their class, the economic development went faster than the character development. This lag between economic and psychological evolution resulted in a situation in which the psychic needs could no longer be satisfied by the usual economic activities. These needs existed, however, and had to seek for satisfaction in some other way. Narrow egotistical striving for one's own advantage, as it had characterized the lower middle class, was shifted from the individual plane to that of the nation. The sadistic impulses, too, that had been used in the battle of private competition were partly shifted to the social and political scene, and partly intensified by frustration. Then, freed from any restricting factors, they sought satisfaction in acts of political persecution and war. Thus, blended

with the resentment caused by the frustrating qualities of the whole situation, the psychological forces instead of cementing the existing social order became dynamite to be used by groups which wanted to destroy the traditional political and economic structure of democratic society

We have not spoken of the role which the educational process plays with regard to the formation of the social character; but in view of the fact that to many psychologists the methods of early childhood training and the educational techniques employed toward the growing child appear to be the *cause* of character development, some remarks on this point seem to be warranted. In the first place we should ask ourselves what we mean by education. While education can be defined in various ways, the way to look at it from the angle of the social process seems to be something like this. The social function of education is to qualify the individual to function in the role he is to play later on in society; that is, to mold his character in such a way that it approximates the social character, that his desires coincide with the necessities of his social role. The educational system of any society is determined by this function; therefore we cannot *explain* the structure of society or the personality of its members by the educational process; but we have to explain the educational system by the necessities resulting from the social and economic structure of a given society. However, the methods of education are extremely important in so far as they are the mechanisms by which the individual is molded into the required shape. They can be considered as the means by which social requirements are transformed into personal qualities. While educational techniques are not the cause of a particular kind of social character, they constitute one of the mechanisms by which character is formed. In this sense, the knowledge and understanding of educational methods is an important part of the total analysis of a functioning society.

What we have just said also holds true for one particular sector of the whole educational process: the *family.* Freud has shown that the early experiences of the child have a decisive influence upon the formation of its character structure. If this is true, how then can we understand that the child, who—at least in our culture—has little contact with the life of society, is molded by it? The answer is not only that the parents—aside from certain individual variations—apply the educational patterns of the society they live in, but also that in their own personalities they represent the social character of their society or class. They transmit to the child what

we may call the psychological atmosphere or the spirit of a society just by being as they are—namely representatives of this very spirit. *The family thus may be considered to be the psychological agent of society.*

Having stated that the social character is shaped by the mode of existence of a given society, I want to remind the reader of what has been said in the first chapter on the problem of dynamic adaptation. While it is true that man is molded by the necessities of the economic and social structure of society, he is not infinitely adaptable. Not only are there certain physiological needs that imperatively call for satisfaction, but there are also certain psychological qualities inherent in man that need to be satisfied and that result in certain reactions if they are frustrated. What are these qualities? The most important seems to be the tendency to grow, to develop and realize potentialities which man has developed in the course of history —as, for instance, the faculty of creative and critical thinking and of having differentiated emotional and sensuous experiences. Each of these potentialities has a dynamism of its own. Once they have developed in the process of evolution they tend to be expressed. This tendency can be suppressed and frustrated, but such suppression results in new reactions, particularly in the formation of destructive and symbiotic impulses. It also seems that this general tendency to grow—which is the psychological equivalent of the identical biological tendency—results in such specific tendencies as the desire for freedom and the hatred against oppression, since freedom is the fundamental condition for any growth. Again, the desire for freedom can be repressed, it can disappear from the awareness of the individual; but even then it does not cease to exist as a potentiality, and indicates its existence by the conscious or unconscious hatred by which such suppression is always accompanied.

We have also reason to assume that, as has been said before, the striving for justice and truth is an inherent trend of human nature, although it can be repressed and perverted like the striving for freedom. In this assumption we are on dangerous ground theoretically. It would be easy if we could fall back on religious and philosophical assumptions which explain the existence of such trends by a belief that man is created in God’s likeness or by the assumption of a natural law. However, we cannot support our argument with such explanations. The only way in our opinion to account for this striving for justice and truth is by the analysis of the whole history of man, socially and individually. We find then that for everybody

who is powerless, justice and truth are the most important weapons in the fight for his freedom and growth. Aside from the fact that the majority of mankind throughout its history has had to defend itself against more powerful groups which could oppress and exploit it, every individual in childhood goes through a period which is characterized by powerlessness. It seems to us that in this state of powerlessness traits like the sense of justice and truth develop and become potentialities common to man as such. We arrive therefore at the fact that, *although character development is shaped by the basic conditions of life and although there is no biologically fixed human nature, human nature has a dynamism of its own that constitutes an active factor in the evolution of the social process.* Even if we are not yet able to state clearly in psychological terms what the exact nature of this human dynamism is, we must recognize its existence. In trying to avoid the errors of biological and metaphysical concepts we must not succumb to an equally grave error, that of a sociological relativism in which man is nothing but a puppet, directed by the strings of social circumstances. Man's inalienable rights of freedom and happiness are founded in inherent human qualities: his striving to live, to expand and to express the potentialities that have developed in him in the process of historical evolution.

At this point we can restate the most important differences between the psychological approach pursued in this book and that of Freud. The first point of difference has been dealt with in a detailed manner in the first chapter, so that it is only necessary to mention it here briefly. We look upon human nature as essentially historically conditioned, although we do not minimize the significance of biological factors and do not believe that the question can be put correctly in terms of cultural versus biological factors. In the second place, Freud's essential principle is to look upon man as an entity, a closed system, endowed by nature with certain physiologically conditioned drives, and to interpret the development of his character as a reaction to satisfactions and frustrations of these drives; whereas, in our opinion, the fundamental approach to human personality is the understanding of man's relation to the world, to others, to nature, and to himself. We believe that man is *primarily* a social being, and not, as Freud assumes, primarily self-sufficient and only secondarily in need of others in order to satisfy his instinctual needs. In this sense, we believe that individual psychology is fundamentally social psychology or, in Sullivan's terms, the psychology of interpersonal relationships; the key problem of

psychology is that of the particular kind of relatedness of the individual toward the world, not that of satisfaction or frustration of single instinctual desires. The problem of what happens to man's instinctual desires has to be understood as one part of the total problem of his relationship toward the world and not as *the* problem of human personality. Therefore, in our approach, the needs and desires that center about the individual's relations to others, such as love, hatred, tenderness, symbiosis, are the fundamental psychological phenomena, while with Freud they are only secondary results from frustrations or satisfactions of instinctive needs.

The difference between Freud's biological and our own social orientation has special significance with regard to the problems of characterology. Freud—and on the basis of his findings, Abraham, Jones, and others—assumed that the child experiences pleasure at so-called erogenous zones (mouth and anus) in connection with the process of feeding and defecation; and that, either by overstimulation, frustration, or constitutionally intensified sensitivity, these erogenous zones retain their libidinous character in later years when in the course of the normal development the genital zone should have become of primary importance. It is assumed that this fixation on the pregenital level leads to sublimations and reaction-formations that become part of the character structure. Thus, for instance, a person may have a drive to save money or other objects, *because* he sublimates the unconscious desire to retain the stool. Or a person may expect to get everything from somebody else and not as a result of his own effort, *because* he is driven by an unconscious wish to be fed which is sublimated into the wish to get help, knowledge, and so forth.

Freud's observations are of great importance, but he gave an erroneous explanation. He saw correctly the passionate and irrational nature of these "oral" and "anal" character traits. He saw also that such desires pervade all spheres of personality, man's sexual, emotional, and intellectual life, and that they color all his activities. But he mistook the causal relation between erogenous zones and character traits for the reverse of what they really are. The desire to receive everything one wants to obtain—love, protection, knowledge, material things—in a passive way from a source outside of oneself, develops in a child's character as a reaction to his experiences with others. If through these experiences the feeling of his own strength is weakened by fear, if his initiative and self-confidence are paralyzed, if hostility develops and is repressed, and if at the same time his father or

mother offers affection or care under the condition of surrender, such a constellation leads to an attitude in which active mastery is given up and all his energies are turned in the direction of an outside source from which the fulfillment of all wishes will eventually come. This attitude assumes such a passionate character because it is the only way in which such a person can attempt to realize his wishes. That often these persons have dreams or phantasies of being fed, nursed, and so on, is due to the fact that the mouth more than any other organ lends itself to the expression of this receptive attitude. But the oral sensation is not the cause of this attitude; it is the expression of an attitude toward the world in the language of the body.

The same holds true for the "anal" person, who on the basis of his particular experiences is more withdrawn from others than the "oral" person, seeks security by making himself an autarchic, self-sufficient system, and feels love or any other outgoing attitude as a threat to his security. It is true that in many instances these attitudes first develop in connection with feeding or defecation, which in the early age of the child are his main activities and also the main sphere in which love or oppression on the part of the parents and friendliness or defiance on the part of the child, are expressed. However, overstimulation and frustration in connection with the erogenous zones by themselves do not lead to a fixation of such attitudes in a person's character; although certain pleasurable sensations are experienced by the child in connection with feeding and defecation, these pleasures do not assume importance for the character development, unless they represent—on the physical level—attitudes that are rooted in the whole of the character structure.

For an infant who has confidence in the unconditional love of his mother, the sudden interruption of breast-feeding will not have any grave characterological consequences; the infant who experiences a lack of reliability in the mother's love may acquire "oral" traits even though the feeding process went on without any particular disturbances. The "oral" or "anal" phantasies or physical sensations in later years are not important on account of the physical pleasure they imply, or any mysterious sublimation of this pleasure, but only on account of the specific kind of relatedness toward the world which is underlying them and which they express.

Only from this point of view can Freud's characterological findings become fruitful for social psychology. As long as we assume, for instance, that the anal character, as it is typical of the European lower middle class, is

caused by certain early experiences in connection with defecation, we have hardly any data that lead us to understand why a specific class should have an anal social character. However, if we understand it as one form of relatedness to others, rooted in the character structure and resulting from the experiences with the outside world, we have a key for understanding why the whole mode of life of the lower middle class, its narrowness, isolation, and hostility, made for the development of this kind of character structure.[84]

The third important point of difference is closely linked up with the previous ones. Freud, on the basis of his instinctivistic orientation and also of a profound conviction of the wickedness of human nature, is prone to interpret all "ideal" motives in man as the result of something "mean"; a case in point is his explanation of the sense of justice as the outcome of the original envy a child has for anybody who has more than he. As has been pointed out before, we believe that ideals like truth, justice, freedom, although they are frequently mere phrases or rationalizations, can be genuine strivings, and that any analysis which does not deal with these strivings as dynamic factors is fallacious. These ideals have no metaphysical character but are rooted in the conditions of human life and can be analyzed as such. The fear of falling back into metaphysical or idealistic concepts should not stand in the way of such analysis. It is the task of psychology as an empirical science to study motivation by ideals as well as the moral problems connected with them, and thereby to free our thinking on such matters from the unempirical and metaphysical elements that befog the issues in their traditional treatment.

Finally, one other point of difference should be mentioned. It concerns the differentiation between psychological phenomena of want and those of abundance. The primitive level of human existence is that of want. There are imperative needs which *have* to be satisfied before anything else. Only when man has time and energy left beyond the satisfaction of the primary needs, can culture develop and with it those strivings that attend the phenomena of abundance. Free (or spontaneous) acts are always phenomena of abundance. Freud's psychology is a psychology of want. He defines pleasure as the satisfaction resulting from the removal of painful tension. Phenomena of abundance, like love or tenderness, actually do not play any role in his system. Not only did he omit such phenomena, but he also had a limited understanding of the phenomenon to which he paid so much attention: sex. According to his whole definition of pleasure Freud

saw in sex only the element of physiological compulsion and in sexual satisfaction the relief from painful tension. The sexual drive as a phenomenon of abundance, and sexual pleasure as spontaneous joy—the essence of which is not negative relief from tension—had no place in his psychology.

What is the principle of interpretation that this book has applied to the understanding of the human basis of culture? Before answering this question it may be useful to recall the main trends of interpretation with which our own differs.

1. The "psychologistic" approach which characterizes Freud's thinking, according to which cultural phenomena are rooted in psychological factors that result from instinctual drives which in themselves are influenced by society only through some measure of suppression. Following this line of interpretation Freudian authors have explained capitalism as the outcome of anal eroticism and the development of early Christianity as the result of the ambivalence toward the father image.[85]

2. The "economistic" approach, as it is presented in the misapplication of Marx's interpretation of history. According to this view, subjective economic interests are the cause of cultural phenomena, such as religion and political ideas. From such a pseudo-Marxian viewpoint,[86] one might try to explain Protestantism as no more than the answer to certain economic needs of the bourgeoisie.

3. Finally there is the "idealistic" position, which is represented by Max Weber's analysis, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* He holds that new religious ideas are responsible for the development of a new type of economic behavior and a new spirit of culture, although he emphasizes that this behavior is never *exclusively* determined by religious doctrines.

In contrast to these explanations, we have assumed that ideologies and culture in general are rooted in the social character; that the social character itself is molded by the mode of existence of a given society; and that in their turn the dominant character traits become productive forces shaping the social process. With regard to the problem of the spirit of Protestantism and capitalism, I have tried to show that the collapse of medieval society threatened the middle class; that this threat resulted in a feeling of powerless isolation and doubt; that this psychological change was responsible for the appeal of Luther's and Calvin's doctrines; that these

doctrines intensified and stabilized the characterological changes; and that the character traits that thus developed then became productive forces in the development of capitalism which in itself resulted from economic and political changes.

With regard to Fascism the same principle of explanation was applied: the lower middle class reacted to certain economic changes, such as the growing power of monopolies and postwar inflation, with an intensification of certain character traits, namely, sadistic and masochistic strivings; the Nazi ideology appealed to and intensified these traits; and the new character traits then became effective forces in supporting the expansion of German imperialism. In both instances we see that when a certain class is threatened by new economic tendencies it reacts to this threat psychologically and ideologically; and that the psychological changes brought about by this reaction further the development of economic forces even if those forces contradict the economic interests of that class. We see that economic, psychological, and ideological forces operate in this way: that man reacts to changing external situations by changes in himself, and that these psychological factors in their turn help in molding the economic and social process. Economic forces are effective, but they must be understood not as psychological motivations but as objective conditions; psychological forces are effective, but they must be understood as historically conditioned themselves; ideas are effective, but they must be understood as being rooted in the whole of the character structure of members of a social group. In spite of this interdependence of economic, psychological, and ideological forces, however, each of them has also a certain independence. This is particularly true of the economic development which, being dependent on objective factors, such as the natural productive forces, technique, geographical factors, takes place according to its own laws. As to the psychological forces, we have indicated that the same holds true; they are molded by the external conditions of life, but they also have a dynamism of their own; that is, they are the expression of human needs which, although they can be molded, cannot be uprooted. In the ideological sphere we find a similar autonomy rooted in logical laws and in the tradition of the body of knowledge acquired in the course of history.

We can restate the principle in terms of social character: The social character results from the dynamic adaptation of human nature to the structure of society. Changing social conditions result in changes of the

social character, that is, in new needs and anxieties. These new needs give rise to new ideas and, as it were, make men susceptible to them; these new ideas in their turn tend to stabilize and intensify the new social character and to determine man’s actions. In other words, social conditions influence ideological phenomena through the medium of character; character, on the other hand, is not the result of passive adaptation to social conditions but of a dynamic adaptation on the basis of elements that either are biologically inherent in human nature or have become inherent as the result of historic evolution.

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Notes

[1] I use the term Fascism or authoritarianism to denote a dictatorial system of the type of the German or Italian one. If I mean the German system in particular, I shall call it Nazism.

[2] John Dewey, *Freedom and Culture*, G. P Putnam's Sons, New York, 1939.

[3] A psychoanalytic approach which, though based on the fundamental achievements of Freud's theory, yet differs from Freud in many important aspects is to be found in Karen Horney's *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1939, and in Harry Stack Sullivan's *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry—The First William Alanson White Memorial Lectures*, in: *Psychiatry*, 1940, Vol. 3, No. 1. Although the two authors differ in many respects, the viewpoint offered here has much in common with the views of both.

[4] Cf. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1921, p. 139 ff.

[5] *Op. cit*., p. 299 ff.

[6] Cf. the contributions of the sociologists J. Dollard and H. D. Lasswell, of the anthropologists R. Benedict, J. Hallowell, R. Linton, M. Mead, E. Sapir and A. Kardiner's application of psychoanalytic concepts to anthropology.

[7] I should like to warn against one confusion which is frequently experienced in regard to this problem. The economic structure of a society in determining the mode of life of the individual operates as condition for personality development. These economic conditions are entirely different from subjective economic motives, such as the desire for material wealth which was looked upon by many writers, from the Renaissance on up to certain Marxist authors who failed to understand Marx's basic concepts, as

the dominant motive of human behavior. As a matter of fact, the all-absorbing wish for material wealth is a need peculiar only to certain cultures, and different economic conditions can create personality traits which abhor material wealth or are indifferent to it. I have discussed this problem in detail in "Uber Methode und Aufgabe einer Analytischen Sozialpsychologie," Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, Hirschfeld, Leipzig, 1932, Vol. I, p. 28 ff.

[8] In an Appendix I shall discuss in more detail the general aspects of the interrelation between psychological and socioeconomic forces.

[9] After completion of this manuscript a study on the different aspects of freedom was presented in *Freedom, Its Meaning*, planned and edited by R. N. Anschen, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1940. I should like to refer here especially to the papers by H. Bergson, J. Dewey, R. M. MacIver, K. Riezler, E Tillich. Also cf. Carl Steuermann, *Der Mensch auf der Flucht*, S. Fischer, Berlin, 1932.

[10] It should be noted here that instinctual frustration *per se* does not arouse hostility. It is the thwarting of expansiveness, the breaking of the child's attempt to assert himself, the hostility radiating from parents—in short, the atmosphere of suppression—which create in the child the feeling of powerlessness and the hostility springing from it.

[11] Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1932, p. 407. Cf. H. S. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 10 ff.

[12] This concept of instinct should not be confused with one which speaks of instinct as a physiologically conditioned urge (such as hunger, thirst, and so on), the satisfaction of which occurs in ways which in themselves are not fixed and hereditarily determined.

[13] L. Bernard, *Instinct*, Holt & Co., New York, 1924, p. 509.

[14] Cf. Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1936, Chapter IV.

[15] In speaking of “medieval society” and the “spirit of the Middle Ages” in contrast to “capitalistic society” we speak of ideal types. Actually, of course, the Middle Ages did not suddenly end at one point and modern society come to life at another. All the economic and social forces that are characteristic of modern society had already developed within the medieval society of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. In the late Middle Ages the role of capital was growing and so was the antagonism between social classes in the towns. As always in history, all the elements of the new social system had already developed in the older order which the new one had superseded. But while it is important to see how many modern elements existed in the late Middle Ages and how many medieval elements continue to exist in modern society, it blocks any theoretical understanding of the historical process if by emphasizing continuity one tries to minimize the fundamental differences between medieval and modern society, or to reject such concepts as “medieval society” and “capitalistic society” for being unscientific constructions. Such attempts, under the guise of scientific objectivity and accuracy, actually reduce social research to the gathering of countless details, and block any understanding of the structure of society and its dynamics.

[16] Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1921, p. 129.

[17] Burckhardt’s main thesis has been confirmed and enlarged by some authors, it has been repudiated by others. More or less in the same direction go W. Dilthey’s *(Weltanschauung und Analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation,* in *Gesammelte Schriften,* Teubner, Leipzig, 1914) and E. Cassirer’s study on “Individuum and Cosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance.” On the other hand, Burckhardt has been sharply attacked by others. J. Huizinga has pointed out *Das Problem der Renaissance* in *Wege der Kulturgeschichte,* Drei Masken Verlag, München, 1930, p. 89 ff.; cf. also his *Herbst des Mittelalters,* Drei Masken Verlag, München, 1924) that Burckhardt has underrated the degree of similarity between the life of the masses in Italy and in other European countries during the late Middle Ages; that he assumes the beginning of the Renaissance to be about 1400, while most of the material he used as an illustration for his thesis is from the fifteenth or the beginning of the

sixteenth century; that he underrates the Christian character of the Renaissance and overrates the weight of the heathen element in it; that he assumes that individualism was the dominant trait of Renaissance culture, while it was only one among others; that the Middle Ages were not lacking individuality to the degree which Burckhardt has assumed and that therefore his way of contrasting the Middle Ages with the Renaissance is incorrect; that the Renaissance remained devoted to authority as the Middle Ages had been; that the medieval world was not as hostile to worldly pleasure and the Renaissance not so optimistic as Burckhardt has assumed; that of the attitude of modern man, namely his striving for personal accomplishments and the development of individuality, nothing but the seeds existed in the Renaissance; that already in the thirteenth century the troubadours had developed the idea of nobility of the heart, while on the other hand the Renaissance did not break with the medieval concept of personal loyalty and service to somebody superior in the social hierarchy.

It seems to me, however, that even if these arguments are correct in detail, they do not invalidate Burckhardt's main thesis. Huizinga's argument actually follows this principle: Burckhardt is wrong because part of the phenomena he claims for the Renaissance existed already in the late Middle Ages in Western and Central Europe, while others came only into existence after the end of the Renaissance period. This is the same kind of argument which has been used against all concepts which contrast medieval feudal with modern capitalistic society; what has been said about this argument above also holds true for the criticism against Burckhardt. Burckhardt has recognized the essential differences which are quantitative as though they were qualitative yet it seems to me that he had the vision to recognize clearly the peculiarities and dynamics of those trends which were to turn from quantitative into qualitative ones in the course of European history. On this whole problem see also the excellent study by Charles E. Trinkhaus, *Adversity's Noblemen,* Columbia University Press, New York, 1940, which contains a constructive criticism of Burckhardt's work by analyzing the views of the Italian humanists on the problem of happiness in life. With regard to the problems discussed in this book, his remarks concerning insecurity, resignation, and despair as a result of the growing competitive struggle for self-advancement are particularly relevant (p. 18).

[18] Cf. Dilthey's analysis of Petrarch (*op. cit., p.* 19 ff.) and Trinkhaus, *Adversity's Noblemen.*

[19] Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1930, p. 65.

[20] Cf. Ernst Troeltsch, *Renaissance and Reformation*, Vol. IV, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Tübingen, 1923.

[21] The following presentation of the economic history of the late Middle Ages and the period of the Reformation is mainly based on:

– Lamprecht, *Zum Verständnis der wirtschaftlichen and sozialen Wandlungen in Deutschland vom 14. zum 16. Jahrhundert,* Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung J.C.B. Mohr, *Zeitschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Freiburg i.B. und Leipzig, 1893.
– Ehrenberg, *Das Zeitalter der Fugger,* G. Fischer, Jena, 1896.
– Sombart, *Der Moderne Kapitalismus*, 1921, 1928.
– v. Below, *Probleme der Wirtschaftsgeschichte,* Mohr, Tübingen, 1920.
– Kulischer, *Allgemeine Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit,* Druck and Verlag von R. Oldenbourg, München and Berlin, 1928.
– Andreas, *Deutschland vor der Reformation,* Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1932.
– Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1930.
– Schapiro, *Social Reform and the Reformation,* Thesis, Columbia University, 1909.
– Pascal, *The Social Basis of the German Reformation, Martin Luther and His Times,* London, 1933.
– Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1926.
– Brentano, *Der wirtschaftende Mensch in der Geschichte,* Meiner, Leipzig, 1923.
– Kraus, *Scholastic, Puritanismus and Kapitalismus,* Dunker & Humblot, München, 1930.

[22] Cf. literature on this problem quoted by J. Kulischer, *op. cit.*, p. 192 ff.

[23] Cf. Lamprecht, *op. cit*., p. 207; Andreas, *op. cit*., p. 303.

[24] Schapiro, *op. cit*., p. 59.

[25] *Works of Martin Luther*, A. J. Holman Company, Philadelphia, Vol. IV, p. 34.

[26] Schapiro, *op. cit*., pp. 54, 55.

[27] Lamprecht, *op. cit*., p. 200.

[28] Quoted by Schapiro, *op. cit*., pp. 21, 22.

[29] Cf. this problem of competition with M. Mead, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1937; L. K. Frank, *The Cost of Competition*, in *Plan Age*, Vol. VI, November–December, 1940.

[30] I follow here mainly R. Seeberg's *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, Deutsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Leipzig. Vol. III, 1930; Vol. IV, 1, 1933; Vol. IV, 2, 1920, and B. Bartmann's *Lehrbuch der Dogmatik*, Herder, Freiburg, 1911.

[31] With regard to the latter point he says: "Whence, the predestined must strive after good works and prayer; because through these means predestination is most certainly fulfilled… and therefore predestination can be furthered by creatures, but it cannot be impeded by them." The *Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Second and revised edition, Burns Oates Washbourne, Ltd., London, 1929, Part I, Q. 23, Art. 8.

[32] Cf. *Summa contra Gentiles*. Vol. III, Chapters 73, 85, 159.

[33] The practice and theory of the letter of indulgence seems to be a particularly good illustration of the influence of growing capitalism. Not only does the idea that one could buy one's freedom from punishment express a new feeling for the eminent role of money, but the theory of the letter of indulgence as formulated in 1343 by Clemens VI also shows the

spirit of the new capitalistic thinking. Clemens VI said that the Pope had in his trust the limitless amount of merits acquired by Christ and the Saints and that he could therefore distribute parts of this treasure to the believers (cf. R. Seeberg, *op. cit.*, p. 621). We find here the concept of the Pope as a monopolist owning an immense moral capital and using it for his own financial advantage—for his "customers"' moral advantage.

[34] I am indebted to Charles Trinkhaus for sharpening my attention to the importance of the mystical and sermon literature and for a number of specific suggestions mentioned in this paragraph.

[35] Martin Luther, *Vorlesung über den Römerbrief*, Chapter I, i. (My own translation since no English translation exists.)

[36] Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*. Translated by Henry Cole, M.A., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1931, p. 74.

[37] *Op. cit*., p. 79. This dichotomy—submission to powers above and domination over those below—is, as we shall see later, characteristic of the attitude of the authoritarian character.

[38] Cf. *"Sermo de duplici institia" (Luther's Werke*, Weimar ed., Vol. II).

[39] "Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants" (1525)*; Works of Martin Luther,* translation: C. M. Jacobs, A. T. Holman Company, Philadelphia, 1931, Vol. X, IV, p. 411. Cf. H. Marcuse's discussion of Luther's attitude toward freedom in *Autorität und Familie*, F. Alcan, Paris, 1926.

[40] John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by John Allen, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia, 1928, Book III, Chapter IX, 1.

[41] *Op. cit*., Book III, Chapter 7, 1. From "For, as it is…" the translation is mine from the Latin original, *Johannes Calvini Institutio Christianae Religionis.* Editionem curavit A. Tholuk, Berolini, 1835. Par. I, p. 445. The reason for this shift is that Allen's translation slightly changes the original in the direction of softening the rigidity of Calvin's thought. Allen translates

this sentence: “For, as compliance with their own inclinations leads men most effectually to ruin, so to place no dependence on our own knowledge or will, but merely to follow the guidance of the Lord, is the only way of safety.” However, the Latin *sibi ipsis obtemperant* is not equivalent to “follow one’s own inclinations” but “to obey oneself.” To forbid following one’s inclinations has the mild quality of Kantian ethics that man should suppress his natural inclinations and by doing so follow the orders of his conscience. On the other hand, the forbiddance to obey oneself is a denial of the autonomy of man. The same subtle change of meaning is reached by translating *ita unicus est salutis portis nihil nec sapere, nec velle per se ipsum* as “to place no dependence on our knowledge or will.” While the formulation of the original straightforwardly contradicts the motto of enlightenment philosophy: *sapere aude*—dare to know: Allen’s translation warns only of a dependence on one’s own knowledge, a warning which is far less contradictory to modern thought. I mention these deviations of the translation from the original because they offer a good illustration of the fact that the spirit of an author is “modernized” and colored—certainly without any intention of doing so—just by translating him.

[42] Cf. J. Kulischer, *op. cit*., p. 249.

[43] Cf. Georgia Harkness, *John Calvin, The Man and His Ethics*, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1931, p. 151 ff.

[44] Cf. F. Borkenau, *Der Übergang vom feudalen zum bürgerlichen Weltbild*, F. Alcan, Paris, 1934, p. 156 ff.

[45] This latter point has found particular attention in M. Weber’s work as being one important link between Calvin’s doctrine and the spirit of capitalism.

[46] Cf. Ranulf’s *Moral Indignation and Middle Class Psychology,* a study which is an important contribution to the thesis that moral indignation is a trait typical of the middle class, especially the lower middle class.

[47] Cf. Max Weber; *op. cit*., p. 102; Tawney, *op. cit*., p. 190*;* Ranulf, *op. cit*., p. 66 ff.

[48] Freud has seen the hostility of man against himself which is contained in what he called the superego. He also saw that the superego was originally the internalization of an external and dangerous authority. But he did not distinguish between spontaneous ideals which are part of the self, and internalized commands which rule the self… The viewpoint presented here is discussed in greater detail in my study on the psychology of authority (*Autorität und Familie*, ed. M. Horkheimer, F. Alcan, Paris, 1934). Karen Horney has pointed out the compulsive character of the demands of the superego in *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*.

[49] A more detailed discussion of the interaction between socioeconomic, ideological, and psychological factors is given in the Appendix.

[50] For a detailed discussion of this problem compare the writer's "Selfishness and Self-Love," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 2, No. 4, November, 1939.

[51] Sullivan has approached this formulation in his lectures. He states that the era of preadolescence is characterized by the appearance of impulses in interpersonal relations which make for a new type of satisfaction in place of the other person (the chum). Love, according to him, is a situation in which the satisfaction of the loved one is exactly as significant and desirable as that of the lover.

[52] Hegel and Marx have laid the foundations for the understanding of the problem of alienation. Cf. in particular Marx's concept of the "fetishism of commodities" and of the "alienation of labor."

[53] This analysis of self-esteem has been stated clearly and explicitly by Ernest Schachtel in an unpublished lecture on "Self-feeling and the 'Sale' of Personality."

[54] Julian Green, *Personal Record*, 1928–1939, translated by J. Godefroi, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1939.

[55] From a different viewpoint K. Horney in her "neurotic trends" (*New Ways in Psychoanalysis*) has arrived at a concept which has certain similarities with my concept of the "mechanisms of escape." The main differences between the two concepts are these: the neurotic trends are the

driving forces in individual neurosis while the mechanisms of escape are driving forces in normal man. Furthermore, Horney's main emphasis is on anxiety while mine is on the isolation of the individual.

[56] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London, 1951, p. 47.

[57] *Charakteranalyse*, Wien, 1933.

[58] *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1936.

[59] "Sozialpsycholgischer Teil," in: *Autorität und Familie*, ed. Max Horkheimer, F. Alcan, Paris, 1936.

[60] Marquis de Sade held the view that the quality of domination is the essence of sadism in this passage from *Juliette II* (quoted from *Marquis de Sade*, by G. Gorer, Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York, 1934): "It is not pleasure which you want to make your partner feel but impression you want to produce; that of pain is far stronger than that of pleasure… one realizes that; one uses it and is satisfied." Gorer in his analysis of de Sade's work defines sadism "as the pleasure felt from the observed modifications on the external world produced by the observer." This definition comes nearer to my own view of sadism than that of other psychologists. I think, however, that Gorer is wrong in identifying sadism with the pleasure in mastery or productivity. The sadistic mastery is characterized by the fact that it wants to make the object a will-less instrument in the sadist's hands, while the nonsadistic joy in influencing others respects the integrity of the other person and is based on a feeling of equality. In Gorer's definition sadism loses its specific quality and becomes identical with any kind of productivity.

[61] Victor Hugo gave a most telling expression to the idea of the inescapability of guilt in the character of Javert in *Les Miserables.*

[62] Moeller van der Bruck, *Das Dritte Reich,* Hanseatische Verlag-anstralt, Hamburg, 1931, pp. 223, 224.

[63] Rauschning has given a good description of the nihilistic character of Fascism in *The Revolution of Nihilism,* Alliance Book Corporation, Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1939.

[64] In this connection, cf. Karen Horney, *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1939.

[65] Cf. the discussion of this point in Karen Horney's *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1939.

[66] Cf. H. S. Sullivan, *op. cit*., p. 68 ff., and his "Research in Schizophrenia," in: *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. IX, No. 3; also Frieda Fromm Reichmann, "Transference Problems in Schizophrenia," in: *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, No. 4.

[67] Regarding the problems of hypnosis cf. list of publications by M. H. Erickson, in: *Psychiatry*, 1939, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 472.

[68] The psychoanalytic procedure is essentially a process in which a person tries to uncover this original self. "Free association" means to express one's original feelings and thoughts, telling the truth; but truth in this sense does not refer to the fact that one says what one thinks, but the thinking itself is original and not an adaptation to an expected thought. Freud has emphasized the repression of "bad" things; it seems that he has not sufficiently seen the extent to which the "good" things are subjected to repression also.

[69] L. Mumford, *Faith for Living*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1940, p. 118.

[70] Cf. to this whole chapter and specifically to the role of the lower middle class, Harold D. Lasswell's illuminating paper on "The Psychology of Hitlerism" in *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. IV, 1933, Macmillan & Co., London, p. 374, and F. L. Schuman's *The Nazi Dictatorship*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1939.

[71] The view presented here is based on the results of an unpublished study of the "Character of German Workers and Employees in 1929/30,"

undertaken by A. Hartoch, E. Herzog, H. Schachtel, and myself (with an historical introduction by F Neumann), under the auspices of the International Institute of Social Research, Columbia University. Analysis of the responses of six hundred persons to a detailed questionnaire showed that a minority of the respondents exhibited the authoritarian character, that with about the same number the quest for freedom and independence was prevalent, while the great majority exhibited a less clear-cut mixture of different traits. [This study finally was published by the editorship of Wolfgang Bonss first in Germany 1980. The English version followed in 1984: *The Working Class in Weimar Germany. A Psychological and Sociological Study*, edited and introduced by Wolfgang Bonns, London (Berg Publishers) 1984; English by Barbara Weinberger.]

[72] Schuman, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

[73] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1940, p. 3.

[74] Joseph Goebbels, *Michael*, F. Eher, München, 1936, p. 57.

[75] Goebbels, *Vom Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlei*, F. Eher, München, 1934, p. 120.

[76] Ley, *Der Weg zur Ordensburg*, Sonderdruck des Reichs-organisations-leiters der NSDAP für das Führercorps der Partei; quoted from Konrad Heiden, *Ein Mann gegen Europa*, Zürich, 1937.

[77] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 618.

[78] Goebbels, *Michael*, p. 25.

[79] According to a communication by Anna Hartoch (from a forthcoming book on case studies of Sarah Lawrence Nursery School children, jointly by M. Gay, A. Hartoch, L. B. Murphy) Rorschach tests of three to five year old children have shown that the attempt to preserve their spontaneity gives rise to the chief conflict between the children and the authoritative adults.

[80] As one telling illustration of the commercialization of friendliness I should like to cite *Fortune's* report on "The Howard Johnson Restaurants."

(Fortune, September, 1940, p. 96). Johnson employs a force of "shoppers" who go from restaurant to restaurant to watch for lapses. "Since everything is cooked on the premises according to standard recipes and measurements issued by the home office, the inspector knows how large a portion of steak he should receive and how the vegetable should taste. He also knows how long it should take for the dinner to be served and he knows the exact degree of friendliness that should be shown by the hostess and the waitress."

[81] Cf. to this whole problem Robert S. Lynd's *Knowledge for What?* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1939. For its philosophical aspects cf. M. Horkheimer's "Zum Rationalismusstreit in der Gegenwärtigen Philosophie," in: *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. 3, 1934, F. Alcan, Paris.

[82] Cf. Max Otto, *The Human Enterprise*, T. S. Croft, New York, 1940. Chaps. IV and V.

[83] The question discussed here leads to a point of great significance which I want at least to mention: that problems of ethics can be clarified by dynamic psychology. Psychologists will only be helpful in this direction when they can see the relevance of moral problems for the understanding of personality. Any psychology, including Freud's, which treats such problems in terms of the pleasure principle, fails to understand one important sector of personality and leaves the field to dogmatic and unempirical doctrines of morality. The analysis of self-love, masochistic sacrifice, and ideals as offered in this book provides illustrations for this field of psychology and ethics that warrant further development.

[84] F. Alexander has attempted to restate Freud's characterological findings in terms that are in some ways similar to our own interpretation. (Cf. F Alexander, "The Influence of Psychological Factors upon Gastro-Intestinal Disturbances," in: *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. XV, 1934.) But although his views constitute an advance over Freud's, he has not succeeded in overcoming a fundamentally biological orientation and in fully recognizing interpersonal relationships as the basis and essence of these "pregenital" drives.

[85] For a fuller discussion of this method cf. E. Fromm, *The Dogma of Christ*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1963.

[86] I call this viewpoint pseudo-Marxian because it interprets Marx's theory as meaning that history is determined by economic motives in terms of the striving for material gain, and not as Marx really meant, in terms of objective conditions which can result in different economic attitudes, of which the intense desire for the gain of material wealth is only one. (This was pointed out in Chapter I.) A detailed discussion of this problem can be found in E. Fromm's "Über Methode and Aufgabe einer Analytischen Sozialpsychologie," in: *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. I, 1932, p. 28 ff. Cf. also the discussion in Robert S. Lynds *Knowledge for What?* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1939. Chap. II.

NEW YORK TIMES–BESTSELLING AUTHOR

ERICH FROMM

TO HAVE OR TO BE?

To Have or To Be?

Erich Fromm

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The Way to do is to be.
LAO-TSE

People should not consider so much what they are to *do*,
as what they *are*.
MASTER ECKHART

The less you *are* and the less you express of your life—the more you *have*
and the greater is your alienated life.
KARL MARX

Foreword

THIS BOOK FOLLOWS TWO TRENDS of my previous writings. First, it extends the development of my work in radical-humanistic psychoanalysis, concentrating on the analysis of selfishness and altruism as two basic character orientations. The last third of the book, Part Three, then carries further a theme I dealt with in *The Sane Society* and *The Revolution of Hope:* the crisis of contemporary society and possibilities for its solution. Repetitions of previously expressed thoughts have been unavoidable, but I hope the new viewpoint from which this small work is written and its extended concepts will compensate even readers who are familiar with my previous writings.

Actually, the title of this book and two earlier titles are almost identical: Gabriel Marcel, *Being and Having*, and Balthasar Staehelin, *Haben und Sein* (Having and Being). All three books are written in the spirit of humanism, but approach the subject in very different ways: Marcel writes from a theological and philosophical standpoint; Staehelin's book is a constructive discussion of materialism in modern science and a contribution to *Wirklichkeitsanalyse;* this volume deals with an empirical psychological and social analysis of the two modes of existence. I recommend the books by Marcel and Staehelin to readers who are sufficiently interested in the topic. (I did not know of the existence of a published English translation of Marcel's book until recently and read it instead in an excellent English translation prepared for my private use by Beverley Hughes. The published version is the one cited in the Bibliography.)

In the interest of making this a more readable book, its footnotes were reduced to a bare minimum, both in number and in length. While some book references appear in parentheses in the text, exact references are to be found in the Bibliography.

Another point of style that I want to clarify concerns the use of generic "man" and "he." I believe I have avoided all "male-oriented" language, and I thank Marion Odomirok for convincing me that the use of language in this respect is far more important than I used to think. On one point only have we been unable to agree in our approach to sexism in language, namely in

respect to the word “man” as the term of reference for the species *Homo Sapiens.* The use of “man” in this context, without differentiation of sex, has a long tradition in humanist thinking, and I do not believe we can do without a word that denotes clearly the human species character. No such difficulty exists in the German language: one uses the word *Mensch* to refer to the nonsex-differentiated being. But even in English the word “man” is used in the same sex-undifferentiated way as the German *Mensch,* as meaning human being or the human race. I think it is advisable to restore its nonsexual meaning to the word “man,” rather than substituting awkward-sounding words. In this book I have capitalized “Man” in order to clarify my nonsex-differentiated use of the term.

There remains now only the pleasant task of expressing my thanks to the several persons who have contributed to the content and style of this book. First of all, I want to thank Rainer Funk, who was of great help to me in more than one respect: in long discussions he helped my understanding of fine points of Christian theology; he was untiring in pointing to literature in the field of theology; he read the manuscript several times and his excellent constructive suggestions as well as his critique helped greatly to enrich the manuscript and to eliminate some errors. I am most grateful to Marion Odomirok for greatly improving this book by her sensitive editing. My thanks also go to Joan Hughes, who conscientiously and patiently typed and retyped the numerous versions of the manuscript and made many excellent suggestions as to style and language. Finally, I thank Annis Fromm, who read the manuscript in its several versions and always responded with many valuable insights and suggestions.

E.F.

New York
June 1976

Introduction: The Great Promise, Its Failure, and New Alternatives

The End of an Illusion

THE GREAT PROMISE OF UNLIMITED PROGRESS—the promise of domination of nature, of material abundance, of the greatest happiness for the greatest number, and of unimpeded personal freedom—has sustained the hopes and faith of the generations since the beginning of the industrial age. To be sure, our civilization began when the human race started taking active control of nature; but that control remained limited until the advent of the industrial age. With industrial progress, from the substitution of mechanical and then nuclear energy for animal and human energy to the substitution of the computer for the human mind, we could feel that we were on our way to unlimited production and, hence, unlimited consumption; that technique made us omnipotent; that science made us omniscient. We were on our way to becoming gods, supreme beings who could create a second world, using the natural world only as building blocks for our new creation.

Men and, increasingly, women experienced a new sense of freedom; they became masters of their own lives: feudal chains had been broken and one could do what one wished, free from all shackles. Or so people felt. And even though this was true only for the upper and middle classes, their achievement could lead others to the faith that eventually the new freedom could be extended to all members of society, provided industrialization kept up its pace. Socialism and communism quickly changed from a movement whose aim was a *new* society and a *new* man into one, whose ideal was a bourgeois life for all, the *universalized bourgeois* as the men and women of the future. The achievement of wealth and comfort for all was supposed to result in unrestricted happiness for all. The trinity of unlimited production, absolute freedom, and unrestricted happiness formed the nucleus of a new religion, Progress, and a new Earthly City of Progress was to replace the City of God. It is not at all astonishing that this new religion provided its believers with energy, vitality, and hope.

The grandeur of the Great Promise, the marvelous material and intellectual achievements of the industrial age, must be visualized in order to understand the trauma that realization of its failure is producing today. For the industrial age has indeed failed to fulfill its Great Promise, and ever growing numbers of people are becoming aware that:

Unrestricted satisfaction of all desires is not conducive to *well-being*, nor is it the way to happiness or even to maximum pleasure.

- The dream of being independent masters of our lives ended when we began awakening to the fact that we have all become cogs in the bureaucratic machine, with our thoughts, feelings, and tastes manipulated by government and industry and the mass communications that they control.
- Economic progress has remained restricted to the rich nations, and the gap between rich and poor nations has ever widened.
- Technical progress itself has created ecological dangers and the dangers of nuclear war, either or both of which may put an end to all civilization and possibly to all life.

When he came to Oslo to accept the Nobel Prize for Peace (1952), Albert Schweitzer challenged the world "to dare to face the situation. … Man has become a superman. … But the superman with the superhuman power has not risen to the level of superhuman reason. To the degree to which his power grows he becomes more and more a poor man. … It must shake up our conscience that we become all the more inhuman the more we grow into supermen."

Why Did the Great Promise Fail?

The failure of the Great Promise, aside from industrialism's essential economic contradictions, was built into the industrial system by its two main psychological premises: (1) that the aim of life is happiness, that is, maximum pleasure, defined as the satisfaction of any desire or subjective need a person may feel *(radical hedonism);* (2) that egotism, selfishness, and greed, as the system needs to generate them in order to function, lead to harmony and peace.

It is well known that the rich throughout history practiced radical hedonism. Those of unlimited means, such as the elite of Rome, of Italian cities of the Renaissance, and of England and France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, tried to find a meaning to life in unlimited pleasure. But while maximum pleasure in the sense of radical hedonism was the practice of certain groups at certain times, with but a single exception prior to the seventeenth century, it was never the *theory* of well-being expressed by the great Masters of Living in China, India, the Near East, and Europe.

The one exception is the Greek philosopher Aristippus, a pupil of Socrates (first half of the fourth century B.C.), who taught that to experience an optimum of bodily pleasure is the goal of life and that happiness is the sum total of pleasures enjoyed. The little we know of his philosophy we owe to Diogenes Laertius, but it is enough to reveal Aristippus as the only real hedonist, for whom the existence of a desire is the basis for the right to satisfy it and thus to realize the goal of life: Pleasure.

Epicurus can hardly be regarded as representative of Aristippus' kind of hedonism. While for Epicurus "pure" pleasure is the highest goal, for him this pleasure meant "absence of pain" *(aponia)* and stillness of the soul *(ataraxia).* According to Epicurus, pleasure as satisfaction of a desire cannot be the aim of life, because such pleasure is necessarily followed by unpleasure and thus keeps humanity away from its real goal of absence of pain. (Epicurus' theory resembles Freud's in many ways.) Nevertheless, it seems that Epicurus represented a certain kind of subjectivism contrary to Aristotle's position, as far as the contradictory reports on Epicurus' statement permit a definite interpretation.

None of the other great Masters taught that the *factual existence of a desire constituted an ethical norm.* They were concerned with humankind's optimal well-being *(vivere bene).* The essential element in their thinking is the distinction between those needs (desires) that are only subjectively felt and whose satisfaction leads to momentary pleasure, and those needs that are rooted in human nature and whose realization is conducive to human growth and produces *eudaimonia,* i.e., "well-being." In other words, they were concerned with *the distinction between purely subjectively felt needs and objectively valid needs*—part of the former being harmful to human growth and the latter being in accordance with the requirements of human nature.

The theory that the aim of life is the fulfillment of every human desire was clearly voiced, for the first time since Aristippus, by philosophers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was a concept that would easily arise when "profit" ceased to mean "profit for the soul" (as it does in the Bible and, even later, in Spinoza), but came to mean material, monetary profit, in the period when the middle class threw away not only its political shackles but also all bonds of love and solidarity and believed that being *only* for oneself meant being more rather than less oneself. For Hobbes happiness is the continuous progress from one greed *(cupiditas)* to another; La Mettrie even recommends drugs as giving at least the illusion of happiness; for de Sade the satisfaction of cruel impulses is legitimate, precisely because they exist and crave satisfaction. These were thinkers who lived in the age of the bourgeois class's final victory. What had been the unphilosophical practices of aristocrats became the practice and theory of the bourgeoisie.

Many ethical theories have been developed since the eighteenth century—some were more respectable forms of hedonism, such as Utilitarianism; others were strictly antihedonistic systems, such as those of Kant, Marx, Thoreau, and Schweitzer. Yet the present era, by and large since the end of the First World War, has returned to the practice and theory of radical hedonism. The concept of unlimited pleasure forms a strange contradiction to the ideal of disciplined work, similar to the contradiction between the acceptance of an obsessional work ethic and the ideal of complete laziness during the rest of the day and during vacations. The endless assembly line belt and the bureaucratic routine on the one hand, and television, the automobile, and sex on the other, make the contradictory combination possible. Obsessional work alone would drive people just as crazy as would complete laziness. With the combination, they can live. Besides, both contradictory attitudes correspond to an economic necessity: twentieth-century capitalism is based on maximal consumption of the goods and services produced as well as on routinized teamwork.

Theoretical considerations demonstrate that radical hedonism cannot lead to happiness as well as why it cannot do so, given human nature. But even without theoretical analysis the observable data show most clearly that our kind of "pursuit of happiness" does not produce well-being. We are a society of notoriously unhappy people: lonely, anxious, depressed,

destructive, dependent—people who are glad when we have killed the time we are trying so hard to save.

Ours is the greatest social experiment ever made to solve the question whether pleasure (as a passive affect in contrast to the active affect, well-being and joy) can be a satisfactory answer to the problem of human existence. For the first time in history the satisfaction of the pleasure drive is not only the privilege of a minority but is possible for more than half the population in the industrialized countries. The experiment has already answered the question in the negative.

The second psychological premise of the industrial age, that the pursuit of individual egoism leads to harmony and peace, growth in everyone's welfare, is equally erroneous on theoretical grounds, and again its fallacy is proven by the observable data. Why should this principle, which only one of the great classical economists, David Ricardo, rejected, be true? To be an egoist refers not only to my behavior but to my character. It means: that I want everything for myself; that possessing, not sharing, gives me pleasure; that I must become greedy because if my aim is having, I *am* more the more I *have;* that I must feel antagonistic toward all others: my customers whom I want to deceive, my competitors whom I want to destroy, my workers whom I want to exploit. I can never be satisfied, because there is no end to my wishes; I must be envious of those who have more and afraid of those who have less. But I have to repress all these feelings in order to represent myself (to others as well as to myself) as the smiling, rational, sincere, kind human being everybody pretends to be.

The passion for having must lead to never-ending class war. The pretense of the communists that their system will end class struggle by abolishing classes is fiction, for their system is based on the principle of unlimited consumption as the goal of living. As long as everybody wants to have more, there must be formations of classes, there must be class war, and in global terms, there must be international war. *Greed and peace preclude each other.*

Radical hedonism and unlimited egotism could not have emerged as guiding principles of economic behavior had not a drastic change occurred in the eighteenth century. In medieval society, as in many other highly developed as well as primitive societies, economic behavior was determined by ethical principles. Thus, for the scholastic theologians, such economic categories as price and private property were part of moral

theology. Granted that the theologians found formulations to adapt their moral code to the new economic demands (for instance Thomas Aquinas' qualification to the concept of "just price"); nevertheless, economic behavior remained *human* behavior and, hence, was subject to the values of humanistic ethics. Through a number of steps eighteenth-century capitalism underwent a radical change: economic behavior became separate from ethics and human values. Indeed, the economic machine was supposed to be an autonomous entity, independent of human needs and human will. It was a system that ran by itself and according to its own laws. The suffering of the workers as well as the destruction of an ever-increasing number of smaller enterprises for the sake of the growth of ever larger corporations was an economic necessity that one might regret, but that one had to accept as if it were the outcome of a natural law.

The development of this economic system was no longer determined by the question: *What is good for Man?* but by the question: *What is good for the growth of the system?* One tried to hide the sharpness of this conflict by making the assumption that what was good for the growth of the system (or even for a single big corporation) was also good for the people. This construction was bolstered by an auxiliary construction: that the very qualities that the system required of human beings—egotism, selfishness, and greed—were innate in human nature; hence, not only the system but human nature itself fostered them. Societies in which egotism, selfishness, and greed did not exist were supposed to be "primitive," their inhabitants "childlike." People refused to recognize that these traits were not natural drives that caused industrial society to exist, but that they were the *products* of social circumstances.

Not least in importance is another factor: people's relation to nature became deeply hostile. Being "freaks of nature" who by the very conditions of our existence are within nature and by the gift of our reason transcend it, we have tried to solve our existential problem by giving up the Messianic vision of harmony between humankind and nature by conquering nature, by transforming it to our own purposes until the conquest has become more and more equivalent to destruction. Our spirit of conquest and hostility has blinded us to the facts that natural resources have their limits and can eventually be exhausted, and that nature will fight back against human rapaciousness.

Industrial society has contempt for nature—as well as for all things not machine-made and for all people who are not machine makers (the nonwhite races, with the recent exceptions of Japan and China). People are attracted today to the mechanical, the powerful machine, the lifeless, and ever increasingly to destruction.

The Economic Necessity for Human Change

Thus far the argument here has been that the character traits engendered by our socioeconomic system, i.e., by our way of living, are pathogenic and eventually produce a sick person and, thus, a sick society. There is, however, a second argument from an entirely different viewpoint in favor of profound psychological changes in Man as an alternative to economic and ecological catastrophe. It is raised in two reports commissioned by the Club of Rome, one by D. H. Meadows et al., the other by M. D. Mesarovic and E. Pestel. Both reports deal with the technological, economic, and population trends on a world scale. Mesarovic and Pestel conclude that only drastic economic and technological changes on a global level, according to a master plan, can "avoid major and ultimately global catastrophe," and the data they array as proof of their thesis are based on the most global and systematic research that has been made so far. (Their book has certain methodological advantages over Meadows's report, but that earlier study considers even more drastic economic changes as an alternative to catastrophe.) Mesarovic and Pestel conclude, furthermore, that such economic changes are possible only *"if fundamental changes in the values and attitudes of man occur* [or as I would call it, in human character orientation], *such as a new ethic and a new attitude toward nature" (empha*sis added). What they are saying confirms only what others have said before and since their report was published, that a new society is possible *only if*, in the process of developing it, a new human being also develops, or in more modest terms, if a fundamental change occurs in contemporary Man's character structure.

Unfortunately, the two reports are written in the spirit of quantification, abstraction, and depersonalization so characteristic of our time, and besides that, they neglect completely all-political and social factors, without which no realistic plan can possibly be made. Yet they present valuable data, and for the first time deal with the economic situation

of the human race as a whole, its possibilities and its dangers. Their conclusion, that a new ethic and a new attitude toward nature are necessary, is all the more valuable because this demand is so contrary to their philosophical premises.

At the other end of the gamut stands E. F. Schumacher, who is also an economist, but at the same time a radical humanist. His demand for a radical human change is based on two arguments: that our present social order makes us sick, and that we are headed for an economic catastrophe unless we radically change our social system.

The need for profound human change emerges not only as an ethical or religious demand, not only as a psychological demand arising from the pathogenic nature of our present social character, but also as a condition for the sheer survival of the human race. Right living is no longer only the fulfillment of an ethical or religious demand. For the first time in history the *physical survival of the human race depends on a radical change of the human heart.* However, a change of the human heart is possible only to the extent that drastic economic and social changes occur that give the human heart the chance for change and the courage and the vision to achieve it.

Is There an Alternative to Catastrophe?

All the data mentioned so far are published and well known. The almost unbelievable fact is that no serious effort is made to avert what looks like a final decree of fate. While in our private life nobody except a mad person would remain passive in view of a threat to his total existence, those who are in charge of public affairs do practically nothing, and those who have entrusted their fate to them let them continue to do nothing.

How is it possible that the strongest of all instincts, that for survival, seems to have ceased to motivate us? One of the most obvious explanations is that the leaders undertake many actions that make it possible for them to pretend they are doing something effective to avoid a catastrophe: endless conferences, resolutions, disarmament talks, all give the impression that the problems are recognized and something is being done to resolve them. Yet nothing of real importance happens; but both the leaders and the led anesthetize their consciences and their wish for survival by giving the appearance of knowing the road and marching in the right direction.

Another explanation is that the selfishness the system generates makes leaders value personal success more highly than social responsibility. It is no longer shocking when political leaders and business executives make decisions that seem to be to their personal advantage, but at the same time are harmful and dangerous to the community. Indeed, if selfishness is one of the pillars of contemporary practical ethics, why should they act otherwise? They do not seem to know that greed (like submission) makes people stupid as far as the pursuit of even their own real interests is concerned, such as their interest in their own lives and in the lives of their spouses and their children (cf. J. Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child).* At the same time, the general public is also so selfishly concerned with their private affairs that they pay little attention to all that transcends the personal realm.

Yet another explanation for the deadening of our survival instinct is that the changes in living that would be required are so drastic that people prefer the future catastrophe to the sacrifice they would have to make now. Arthur Koestler's description of an experience he had during the Spanish Civil War is a telling example of this widespread attitude: Koestler sat in the comfortable villa of a friend while the advance of Franco's troops was reported; there was no doubt that they would arrive during the night, and very likely he would be shot; he could save his life by fleeing, but the night was cold and rainy, the house, warm and cozy; so he stayed, was taken prisoner, and only by almost a miracle was his life saved many weeks later by the efforts of friendly journalists. This is also the kind of behavior that occurs in people who will risk dying rather than undergo an examination that could lead to the diagnosis of a grave illness requiring major surgery.

Aside from these explanations for fatal human passivity in matters of life and death, there is another, which is one of my reasons for writing this book. I refer to the view that we have no alternatives to the models of corporate capitalism, social democratic or Soviet socialism, or technocratic "fascism with a smiling face." The popularity of this view is largely due to the fact that little effort has been made to study the feasibility of entirely new social models and to experiment with them. Indeed, as long as the problems of social reconstruction will not, even if only partly, take the place of the preoccupation of our best minds with science and technique, the imagination will be lacking to visualize new and realistic alternatives.

The main thrust of this book is the analysis of the two basic modes of existence: the *mode of having* and the *mode of being.* In the opening chapter I present some "first glance" observations concerning the difference between the two modes. The second chapter demonstrates the difference, using a number of examples from daily experience that readers can easily relate to in their own personal experience. Chapter III presents the views on having and being in the Old and the New Testaments and in the writings of Master Eckhart. Subsequent chapters deal with the most difficult issue: the analysis of the difference between the having and the being modes of existence in which I attempt to build theoretical conclusions on the basis of the empirical data. While up to this point the book mainly concerns the individual aspects of the two basic modes of existence, the final chapters deal with the relevance of these modes in the formation of a New Man and a New Society and address themselves to the possibilities of alternatives to debilitating individual ill-being, and to catastrophic socioeconomic development of the whole world.

PART ONE

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAVING AND BEING

I.
A First Glance

The Importance of the Difference Between Having and Being

THE ALTERNATIVE OF *having* versus *being* does not appeal to common sense. *To have*, so it would seem, is a normal function of our life: in order to live we must have things. Moreover, we must have things in order to enjoy them. In a culture in which the supreme goal is to have—and to have more and more—and in which one can speak of someone as "being worth a million dollars," how can there be an alternative between having and being? On the contrary, it would seem that the very essence of being is having; that if one *has* nothing, one is nothing.

Yet the great Masters of Living have made the alternative between having and being a central issue of their respective systems. The Buddha teaches that in order to arrive at the highest stage of human development, we must not crave possessions. Jesus teaches: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Luke 9:24-25). Master Eckhart taught that to have nothing and make oneself open and "empty," not to let one's ego stand in one's way, is the condition for achieving spiritual wealth and strength. Marx taught that luxury is as much a vice as poverty and that our goal should be to *be* much, not to *have* much. (I refer here to the real Marx, the radical humanist, not to the vulgar forgery presented by Soviet communism.)

For many years I had been deeply impressed by this distinction and was seeking its empirical basis in the concrete study of individuals and groups by the psychoanalytic method. What I saw has led me to conclude that this distinction, together with that between love of life and love of the dead, represents the most crucial problem of existence; that empirical

anthropological and psychoanalytic data tend to demonstrate that *having and being are two fundamental modes of experience, the respective strengths* of *which determine the differences between the characters of individuals and various types of social character.*

Examples in Various Poetic Expressions

As an introduction to understanding the difference between the having and being modes of existence, let me use as an illustration two poems of similar content that the late D.T. Suzuki referred to in "Lectures on Zen Buddhism." One is a haiku by a Japanese poet, Basho, 1644-1694; the other poem is by a nineteenth-century English poet, Tennyson. Each poet describes a similar experience: his reaction to a flower he sees while taking a walk. Tennyson's verse is:

> Flower in a crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

Translated into English, Basho's haiku runs something like this:

> When I look carefully
> I see the *nazuna* blooming
> By the hedge!

The difference is striking. Tennyson reacts to the flower by wanting to *have* it. He "plucks" it "root and all." And while he ends with an intellectual speculation about the flower's possible function for his attaining insight into the nature of God and man, the flower itself is killed as a result of his interest in it. Tennyson, as we see him in his poem, may be compared to the Western scientist who seeks the truth by means of dismembering life.

Basho's reaction to the flower is entirely different. He does not want to pluck it; he does not even touch it. All he does is "look carefully" to "see" it. Here is Suzuki's description:

It is likely that Basho was walking along a country road when he noticed something rather neglected by the hedge. He then approached closer, took a good look at it, and found it was no less than a wild plant, rather insignificant and generally unnoticed by passersby. This is a plain fact described in the poem with no specifically poetic feeling expressed anywhere except perhaps in the last two syllables, which read in Japanese *kana*. This particle, frequently attached to a noun or an adjective or an adverb, signifies a certain feeling of admiration or praise or sorrow or joy, and can sometimes quite appropriately be rendered into English by an exclamation mark. In the present *haiku* the whole verse ends with this mark.

Tennyson, it appears, needs to possess the flower in order to understand people and nature, and by his *having* it, the flower is destroyed. What Basho wants is to *see,* and not only to look at the flower, but to be at one, to "one" himself with it—and to let it live. The difference between Tennyson and Basho is fully explained in this poem by Goethe:

FOUND

I walked in the woods
All by myself,
To seek nothing,
That was on my mind.

I saw in the shade
A little flower stand,
Bright like the stars
Like beautiful eyes.

I wanted to pluck it,
But it said sweetly:
Is it to wilt
That I must be broken?

I took it out
With all its roots,
Carried it to the garden

At the pretty house.

And planted it again
In a quiet place;
Now it ever spreads
And blossoms forth.

Goethe, walking with no purpose in mind, is attracted by the brilliant little flower. He reports having the same impulse as Tennyson: to pluck it. But unlike Tennyson, Goethe is aware that this means killing the flower. For Goethe the flower is so much alive that it speaks and warns him; and he solves the problem differently from either Tennyson or Basho. He takes the flower "with all its roots" and plants it again so that its life is not destroyed. Goethe stands, as it were, between Tennyson and Basho: for him, at the crucial moment, the force of life is stronger than the force of mere intellectual curiosity. Needless to say that in this beautiful poem Goethe expresses the core of his concept of investigating nature.

Tennyson's relationship to the flower is in the mode of having, or possession—not material possession but the possession of knowledge. Basho's and Goethe's relationship to the flower each sees is in the mode of being. By being I refer to the mode of existence in which one neither *has* anything nor craves *to have* something, but is joyous, employs one's faculties productively, is *oned* to the world.

Goethe, the great lover of life, one of the outstanding fighters against human dismemberment and mechanization, has given expression to being as against having in many poems. His Faust is a dramatic description of the conflict between being and having (the latter represented by Mephistopheles), while in the following short poem he expresses the quality of being with the utmost simplicity:

PROPERTY

I know that nothing belongs to me
But the thought which unimpeded
From my soul will flow.
And every favorable moment
Which loving Fate
From the depth lets me enjoy.

The difference between being and having is not essentially that between East and West. The difference is rather between a society centered around persons and one centered around things. The having orientation is characteristic of Western industrial society, in which greed for money, fame, and power has become the dominant theme of life. Less alienated societies —such as medieval society, the Zuni Indians, the African tribal societies that were not affected by the ideas of modern "progress"—have their own Bashos. Perhaps after a few more generations of industrialization, the Japanese will have their Tennysons. It is not that Western Man cannot fully understand Eastern systems, such as Zen Buddhism (as Jung thought), but that modern Man cannot understand the spirit of a society that is not centered in property and greed. Indeed, the writings of Master Eckhart (as difficult to understand as Basho or Zen) and the Buddha's writings are only two dialects of the same language.

Idiomatic Changes

A certain change in the emphasis on having and being is apparent in the growing use of nouns and the decreasing use of verbs in Western languages in the past few centuries.

A noun is the proper denotation for a thing. I can say that I *have* things: for instance that I have a table, a house, a book, a car. The proper denotation for an activity, a process, is a verb: for instance I am, I love, I desire, I hate, etc. Yet ever more frequently an *activity is* expressed in terms of *having;* that is, a noun is used instead of a verb. But to express an activity by *to have* in connection with a noun is an erroneous use of language, because processes and activities cannot be possessed; they can only be experienced.

Older Observations: Du Marais—Marx

The evil consequences of this confusion were already recognized in the eighteenth century. Du Marais gave a very precise expression of the problem in his posthumously published work *Les Veritables Principes de la Grammaire* (1769). He writes: "In this example, *I have a watch, I have* must be understood in its proper sense; but in *I have an idea, I have* is said only by way of imitation. It is a borrowed expression. *I have an idea* means

I think, I conceive of in such and such a way. I have a longing means *I desire; I have the will* means *I want,* etc." (my translation; I am indebted to Dr. Noam Chomsky for the reference to Du Marais).

A century after Du Marais observed this phenomenon of the substitution of nouns for verbs Marx and Engels deal with the same problem, but in a more radical fashion, in *The Holy Family.* Included in their critique of Edgar Bauer's "critical critique" is a small, but very important essay on love in which reference is made to the following statement by Bauer: "Love is a cruel goddess, who like all deities, wants to possess the whole man and who is not content until he has sacrificed to her not only his soul but also his physical self. Her cult is suffering; the peak of this cult is self-sacrifice, is suicide" (my translation).

Marx and Engels answer: Bauer "transforms love into a 'goddess,' and into a 'cruel goddess' by transforming the *loving man* or the *love of man* into the *man of love;* he thus separates love as a separate being from man and makes it an independent entity" (my translation). Marx and Engels point here to the decisive factor in the use of the noun instead of the verb. The noun "love," which is only an abstraction for the activity of loving, becomes separated from the man. The loving man becomes the man of love. Love becomes a goddess, an idol into which the man projects his loving; in this process of alienation he ceases to experience love, but is in touch only with his capacity to love by his submission to the goddess Love. He has ceased to be an active person who feels; instead he has become an alienated worshiper of an idol.

Contemporary Usage

During the two hundred years since Du Marais, this trend of the substitution of nouns for verbs has grown to proportions that even he could hardly have imagined. Here is a typical, if slightly exaggerated, example of today's language. Assume that a person seeking a psychoanalyst's help opens the conversation with the following sentence: "Doctor, I *have* a problem; I *have* insomnia. Although I *have* a beautiful house, nice children, and a happy marriage, I *have* many worries." Some decades ago, instead of "I have a problem," the patient probably would have said, "I *am* troubled"; instead of "I *have* insomnia," "I *cannot* sleep"; instead of "I *have* a happy marriage," "I *am* happily married."

The more recent speech style indicates the prevailing high degree of alienation. By saying “I *have* a problem” instead of “I *am* troubled,” subjective experience is eliminated: the *I* of experience is replaced by the *it* of possession. I have transformed my feeling into something I possess: the problem. But “problem” is an abstract expression for all kinds *of* difficulties. I cannot *have* a problem, because it is not a thing that can be owned; it, however, can have me. That is to say, I have transformed *myself* into “a problem” and am now owned by my creation. This way of speaking betrays a hidden, unconscious alienation.

Of course, one can argue that insomnia is a physical symptom like a sore throat or a toothache, and that it is therefore as legitimate to say that one *has* insomnia as it is to say that one *has* a sore throat. Yet there is a difference: a sore throat or a toothache is a bodily sensation that can be more or less intense, but it has little psychical quality. One can *have* a sore throat, for one has a throat, or an aching tooth, for one has teeth. Insomnia, on the contrary, is not a bodily sensation but a state of mind, that of not being able to sleep. If I speak of “having insomnia” instead of saying “I cannot sleep,” I betray my wish to push away the experience of anxiety, restlessness, tension that prevents me from sleeping, and to deal with the mental phenomenon *as if it were* a bodily symptom.

For another example: To say, “I have great love for you,” is meaningless. Love is not a thing that one can have, but a *process*, an inner activity that one is the subject of. I can love, I can *be* in love, but in loving, I *have* … nothing. In fact, the less I have, the more I can love.

Origin of the Terms

“To have” is a deceptively simple expression. Every human being *has* something: a body,[1] clothes, shelter—on up to the modern man or woman who has a car, a television set, a washing machine, etc. Living without having something is virtually impossible. Why, then, should having be a problem? Yet the linguistic history of “having” indicates that the word is indeed a problem. To those who believe that to have is a most natural category of human existence it may come as a surprise to learn that many languages have no word for “to have.” In Hebrew, for instance, “I have” must be expressed by the indirect form *jesh li* (“it is to me”). In fact, languages that express possession in this way, rather than by “I have,”

predominate. It is interesting to note that in the development of many languages the construction “it is to me” is followed later on by the construction “I have,” but as Emile Benveniste has pointed out, the evolution does not occur in the reverse direction.[2] This fact suggests that the word for *to have* develops in connection with the development of private property, while it is absent in societies with predominantly functional property, that is, possession for use. Further sociolinguistic studies should be able to show *if* and to what extent this hypothesis is valid.

If *having* seems to be a relatively simple concept, *being*, or the form “to be,” is all the more complicated and difficult. “Being” is used in several different ways: (1) as a copula—such as “I am tall,” “I am white,” “I am poor,” i.e., a grammatical denotation *of* identity (many languages do not have a word for “to be” in this sense; Spanish distinguishes between permanent qualities, *ser*, which belong to the essence *of* the subject, and contingent qualities, *estar,* which are not *of* the essence); (2) as the passive, suffering form *of* a verb—for example, “I am beaten” means I am the object of another’s activity, not the subject of my activity, as in “I beat”; (3) as meaning to exist—wherein, as Benveniste has shown, the “to be” of existence is a different term from “to be” as a copula stating identity: “The two words have coexisted and can still coexist, although they are entirely different.”

Benveniste’s study throws new light on the meaning of “to be” as a verb in its own right rather than as a copula. “To be,” in Indo-European languages, is expressed by the root *es*, the meaning of which is “to have existence, to be found in reality.” Existence and reality are defined as “that which is authentic, consistent, true.” (In Sanskrit, *sant*, “existent,” “actual good,” “true”; superlative *Sattama,* “the best.”) “Being” in its etymological root is thus more than a statement of identity between subject and attribute; it is more than a *descriptive* term for a phenomenon. It denotes the reality of existence of who or what is; it states his/her/its authenticity and truth. Stating that somebody or something *is* refers to the person’s or the thing’s essence, not to his/her/its appearance.

This preliminary survey of the meaning of having and being leads to these conclusions:

1. By being or having I do not refer to certain separate qualities of a subject as illustrated in such statements as “I have a car” or “I am

white" or "I am happy." I refer to two fundamental modes of existence, to two different kinds of orientation toward self and the world, to two different kinds of character structure the respective predominance of which determines the totality of a person's thinking, feeling, and acting.

2. In the having mode of existence my relationship to the world is one of possessing and owning, one in which I want to make everybody and everything, including myself, my property.

In the being mode of existence, we must identify two forms of being. One is in contrast to *having*, as exemplified in the Du Marais statement, and means aliveness and authentic relatedness to the world. The other form of being is in contrast to *appearing* and refers to the true nature, the true reality, of a person or a thing in contrast to deceptive appearances as exemplified in the etymology of being (Benveniste).

Philosophical Concepts of Being

The discussion of the concept of being is additionally complicated because being has been the subject matter of many thousands of philosophical books and "What is being?" has been one of the crucial questions of Western philosophy. While the concept of being will be treated here from anthropological and psychological points of view, the philosophical discussion is, of course, not unrelated to the anthropological problems. Since even a brief presentation of the development of the concept of being in the history of philosophy from the pre-Socratics to modern philosophy would go beyond the given limits of this book, I shall mention only one crucial point: the concept of process, *activity, and movement as an element in being*. As George Simmel has pointed out, the idea that being implies change, i.e., that being is *becoming*, has its two greatest and most uncompromising representatives at the beginning and at the zenith of Western philosophy: in Heraclitus and in Hegel.

The position that being is a permanent, timeless, and unchangeable substance and the opposite of becoming, as expressed by Parmenides, Plato, and the scholastic "realists," makes sense only on the basis of the idealistic notion that a thought (idea) is the ultimate reality. If the *idea* of love (in Plato's sense) is more real than the experience of loving, one can say that

love as an idea is permanent and unchangeable. But when we start out with the reality of human beings existing, loving, hating, suffering, then there is no being that is not at the same time becoming and changing. Living structures can be only if they become; they can exist only if they change. Change and growth are inherent qualities of the life process.

Heraclitus' and Hegel's radical concept of life as a process and not as a substance is paralleled in the Eastern world by the philosophy of the Buddha. There is no room in Buddhist thought for the concept of any enduring permanent substance, neither things nor the self. Nothing is real but processes.[3] Contemporary scientific thought has brought about a renaissance of the philosophical concepts of "process thinking" by discovering and applying them to the natural sciences.

Having and Consuming

Before discussing some simple illustrations of the having and being modes of existence, another manifestation of having must be mentioned, that of *incorporating.* Incorporating a thing, for instance by eating or drinking, is an archaic form of possessing it. At a certain point in its development an infant tends to take things it wants into its mouth. This is the infant's form of taking possession, when its bodily development does not yet enable it to have other forms of controlling its possessions. We find the same connection between incorporation and possession in many forms of cannibalism. For example: by eating another human being, I acquire that person's powers (thus cannibalism can be the magic equivalent of acquiring slaves); by eating the heart of a brave man, I acquire his courage; by eating a totem animal, I acquire the divine substance the totem animal symbolizes.

Of course, most objects cannot be incorporated physically (and inasmuch as they could, they would be lost again in the process of elimination). But there is also *symbolic* and *magic* incorporation. If I believe I have incorporated a god's, a father's, or an animal's image, it can neither be taken away nor eliminated. I swallow the object symbolically and believe in its symbolic presence within myself. This is, for instance, how Freud explained the superego: the introjected sum total of the father's prohibitions and commands. An authority, an institution, an idea, an image can be introjected in the same way: I *have* them, eternally protected in my bowels, as it were. ("Introjection" and "identification" are often used

synonymously, but it is difficult to decide whether they are really the same process. At any rate, “identification” should not be used loosely, when one should better talk of imitation or subordination.)

There are many other forms of incorporation that are not connected with physiological needs and, hence, are not limited. The attitude inherent in consumerism is that of swallowing the whole world. The consumer is the eternal suckling crying for the bottle. This is obvious in pathological phenomena, such as alcoholism and drug addiction. We apparently single out both these addictions because their effects interfere with the addicted person’s social obligations. Compulsive smoking is not thus censured because, while not less of an addiction, it does not interfere with the smokers’ social functions, but possibly “only” with their life spans.

Further attention is given to the many forms of everyday consumerism later on in this volume. I might only remark here that as far as leisure time is concerned, automobiles, television, travel, and sex are the main objects of present-day consumerism, and while we speak of them as leisure-time activities, we would do better to call them leisure-time *passivities.*

To sum up, to consume is one form of having, and perhaps the most important one for today’s affluent industrial societies. Consuming has ambiguous qualities: It relieves anxiety, because what one has cannot be taken away; but it also requires one to consume ever more, because previous consumption soon loses its satisfactory character. Modern consumers may identify themselves by the formula: *I am = what I have and what I consume.*

II.
Having and Being in Daily Experience

BECAUSE THE SOCIETY WE live in is devoted to acquiring property and making a profit, we rarely see any evidence of the being mode of existence and most people see the having mode as the most natural mode of existence, even the only acceptable way of life. All of which makes it especially difficult for people to comprehend the nature of the being mode, and even to understand that having is only one possible orientation. Nevertheless, these two concepts are rooted in human experience. Neither one should be, or can be, examined in an abstract, purely cerebral way; both are reflected in our daily life and must be dealt with concretely. The following simple examples of how having and being are demonstrated in everyday life may help readers to understand these two alternative modes of existence.

Learning

Students in the having mode of existence will listen to a lecture, hearing the words and understanding their logical structure and their meaning and, as best they can, will write down every word in their looseleaf notebooks—so that, later on, they can memorize their notes and thus pass an examination. But the content does not become part of their own individual system of thought, enriching and widening it. Instead, they transform the words they hear into fixed clusters of thought, or whole theories, which they store up. The students and the content of the lectures remain strangers to each other, except that each student has become the owner of a collection of statements made by somebody else (who had either created them or taken them over from another source).

Students in the having mode have but one aim: to hold onto what they "learned," either by entrusting it firmly to their memories or by carefully

guarding their notes. They do not have to produce or create something new. In fact, the *having*-type individuals feel rather disturbed by new thoughts or ideas about a subject, because the new puts into question the fixed sum of information they have. Indeed, to one for whom having is the main form of relatedness to the world, ideas that cannot easily be pinned down (or penned down) are frightening—like everything else that grows and changes, and thus is not controllable.

The process of learning has an entirely different quality for students in the being mode of relatedness *to* the world. To begin with, they do not go to the course of lectures, even to the first one in a course, as *tabulae rasae.* They have thought beforehand about the problems the lectures will be dealing with and have in mind certain questions and problems of their own. They have been occupied with the topic and it interests them. Instead of being passive receptacles of words and ideas, they listen, they *hear,* and most important, they *receive* and they *respond* in an active, productive way. What they listen to stimulates their own thinking processes. New questions, new ideas, new perspectives arise in their minds. Their listening is an alive process. They listen with interest, hear what the lecturer says, and spontaneously come to life in response to what they hear. They do not simply acquire knowledge that they can take home and memorize. Each student has been affected and has changed: each is different after the lecture than he or she was before it. Of course, this mode of learning can prevail only if the lecture offers stimulating material. Empty talk cannot be responded to in the being mode, and in such circumstances, students in the being mode find it best not to listen at all, but to concentrate on their own thought processes.

At least a passing reference should be made here to the word "interests," which in current usage has become a pallid, worn-out expression. Yet its essential meaning is contained in its root: Latin, *inter-esse,* "to be in [or] among" it. This active interest was expressed in Middle English by the term "to list" (adjective, listy; adverb, listily). In modern English, "to list" is only used in a spatial sense: "a ship lists"; the original meaning in a psychical sense we have only in the negative "listless." "To list" once meant "to be actively striving for," "to be genuinely interested in." The root is the same as that of "lust," but "to list" is not a lust one is *driven by,* but the *free and active interest in, or striving for*. "To list" is one of the key expressions of the anonymous author (mid-fourteenth century) of

The Cloud of Unknowing (Evelyn Underhill, ed.). That the language has retained the word only in its negative sense is characteristic of the change of spirit in society from the thirteenth to the twentieth century.

Remembering

Remembering can occur in either the having or the being mode. What matters most for the difference between the two forms of remembering is the *kind* of connection that is made. In the having mode of remembering, the connection is entirely *mechanical*, as when the connection between one word and the next becomes firmly established by the frequency with which it is made. Or the connections may be purely *logical*, such as the connection between opposites, or between converging concepts, or with time, space, size, color, or within a given system of thought.

In the being mode, remembering is *actively* recalling words, ideas, sights, paintings, music; that is, connecting the single datum to be remembered and the many other data that it is connected with. The connections in the case of being are neither mechanical nor purely logical, but alive. One concept is connected with another by a productive act of thinking (or feeling) that is mobilized when one searches for the right word. A simple example: If I associate the word “headache” “with the word “aspirin,” I deal with a logical, conventional association. But if I associate the word “headache” with “stress” or “anger,” I connect the given datum with its possible causes, an insight I have arrived at in studying the phenomenon. This latter type of remembering constitutes in itself an act of productive thinking. The most striking examples of this kind of alive remembering are the “free associations” devised by Freud.

Persons not mainly inclined toward storing up data will find that their memories, in order to function well, need a strong and immediate *interest.* For example, individuals have been known to remember words of a long-forgotten foreign language when it has been of vital importance to do so. And in my own experience, while I am not endowed with a particularly good memory, I have remembered the dream of a person I analyzed, be it two weeks or five years ago, when I again come face to face with and concentrate on the whole personality of that person. Yet not five minutes before, in the cold as it were, I was quite unable to remember that dream.

Remembering in the mode of being implies bringing to life something one saw or heard before. We can experience this productive remembering by trying to envision a person's face or scenery that we had once seen. We will not be able to remember instantly in either case; we must re-create the subject, bring it to life in our mind. This kind of remembering is not always easy; to be able to fully recall the face or the scenery one must once have seen it with sufficient concentration. When such remembering is fully achieved, the person whose face is recalled is as alive, the remembered scenery as vivid, as if that person or that scenery were actually physically before one.

The way those in the having mode remember a face or scenery is typified by the way most people look at a photograph. The photograph serves only as an aid to their memory in identifying a person or a scene, and the usual reaction it elicits is: "Yes, that's him"; or "Yes, I've been there." The photograph becomes, for most people, an *alienated* memory.

Memory entrusted to paper is another form of alienated remembering. By writing down what I want to remember I am sure to *have* that information, and I do not try to engrave it on my brain. I am sure of my possession—except that when I have lost my notes, I have lost my memory of the information, too. My capacity to remember has left me, for my memory bank had become an externalized part of me, in the form of my notes.

Considering the multitude of data that people in contemporary society need to remember, a certain amount of note making and information deposited in books is unavoidable. One can easily and best observe in oneself that writing down things diminishes one's power of remembering, but some typical examples may prove helpful.

An everyday example occurs in stores. Today a salesclerk will rarely do a simple addition of two or three items in his or her head, but will immediately use a machine. The classroom provides another example. Teachers can observe that the students who carefully write down every sentence of the lecture will, in all likelihood, understand and remember less than the students who trusted their capacity to understand and, hence, remember at least the essentials. Further, musicians know that those who most easily sight-read a score have more difficulty in remembering the music without the score.[4] (Toscanini, whose memory was known to be extraordinary, is a good example of a musician in the being mode.) For a

final example, in Mexico I have observed that people who are illiterate or who write little have memories far superior to the fluently literate inhabitants of the industrialized countries. Among other facts, this suggests that literacy is by no means the blessing it is advertised to be, especially when people use it merely to read material that impoverishes their capacity to experience and to imagine.

Conversing

The difference between the having and being modes can be easily observed in two examples of conversations. Let us take a typical conversational debate between two men in which A *has* opinion X and B *has* opinion Y. Each identifies with his own opinion. What matters to each is to find better, i.e., more reasonable, arguments to defend his opinion. Neither expects to change his own opinion, or that his opponent's opinion will change. Each is afraid of changing his own opinion, precisely because it is one of his possessions, and hence its loss would mean an impoverishment.

The situation is somewhat different in a conversation that is not meant to be a debate. Who has not experienced meeting a person distinguished by prominence or fame or even by real qualities, or a person of whom one wants something: a good job, to be loved, to be admired? In any such circumstances many people tend to be at least mildly anxious, and often they "prepare" themselves for the important meeting. They think of topics that might interest the other; they think in advance how they might begin the conversation; some even map out the whole conversation, as far as their own part is concerned. Or they may bolster themselves up by thinking about what they *have:* their past successes, their charming personality (or their intimidating personality if this role is more effective), their social position, their connections, their appearance and dress. In a word, they mentally balance their worth, and based on this evaluation, they display their wares in the ensuing conversation. The person who is very good at this will indeed impress many people, although the created impression is only partly due to the individual's performance and largely due to the poverty of most people's judgment. If the performer is not so clever, however, the performance will appear wooden, contrived, boring and will not elicit much interest.

In contrast are those who approach a situation by preparing nothing in advance, not bolstering themselves up in any way. Instead, they respond spontaneously and productively; they forget about themselves, about the knowledge, the positions they have. Their egos do not stand in their own way, and it is precisely for this reason that they can fully respond to the other person and that person's ideas. They give birth to new ideas, because they are not holding onto anything. While the having persons rely on what they *have*, the being persons rely on the fact that they *are*, that they are alive and that something new will be born if only they have the courage to let go and to respond. They come fully alive in the conversation, because they do not stifle themselves by anxious concern with what they have. Their own aliveness is infectious and often helps the other person to transcend his or her egocentricity. Thus the conversation ceases to be an exchange of commodities (information, knowledge, status) and becomes a dialogue in which it does not matter any more who is right. The duelists begin to dance together, and they part not with triumph or sorrow—which are equally sterile—but with joy. (The essential factor in psychoanalytic therapy is this enlivening quality of the therapist. No amount of psychoanalytic interpretation will have an effect if the therapeutic atmosphere is heavy, unalive, and boring.)

Reading

What holds true for a conversation holds equally true for reading, which is—or should be—a conversation between the author and the reader. Of course, in reading (as well as in a personal conversation) *whom I* read from (or talk with) is important. Reading an artless, cheap novel is a form of daydreaming. It does not permit productive response; the text is swallowed like a television show, or the potato chips one munches while watching TV. But a novel, say by Balzac, can be read with inner participation, productively—that is, in the mode of being. Yet probably most of the time it is also read in the mode of consuming—of having. Their curiosity having been aroused, the readers want to know the plot: whether the hero dies or lives, whether the heroine is seduced or resists; they want to know the answers. The novel serves as a kind of foreplay to excite them; the happy or unhappy end culminates their experience: when they know the end, they *have* the whole story, almost as real as if they rummaged in their

own memories. But they have not enhanced their knowledge; they have not understood the person in the novel and thus have not deepened their insight into human nature, or gained knowledge about themselves.

The modes of reading are the same with regard to a book whose theme is philosophy or history. The way one reads a philosophy or history book is formed—or better, deformed—by education. The school aims to give each student a certain amount of "cultural property," and at the end of their schooling certifies the students as *having* at least the minimum amount. Students are taught to read a book so that they can repeat the author's main thoughts. This is how the students "know" Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Heidegger, Sartre. The difference between various levels of education from high school to graduate school is mainly in the amount of cultural property that is acquired, which corresponds roughly to the amount of material property the students may be expected to own in later life. The so-called excellent students are the ones who can most accurately repeat what each of the various philosophers had to say. They are like a well-informed guide at a museum. What they do not learn is that which goes beyond this kind of property knowledge. They do not learn to question the philosophers, to talk to them; they do not learn to be aware of the philosophers' own contradictions, of their leaving out certain problems or evading issues; they do not learn to distinguish between what was new and what the authors could not help thinking because it was the "common sense" of their time; they do not learn to hear so that they are able to distinguish when the authors speak only from their brain and when their brain and heart speak together; they do not learn to discover whether the authors are authentic or fake; and many more things.

The mode of being readers will often come to the conclusion that even a highly praised book is entirely without or of very limited value. Or they may have fully understood a book, sometimes better than had the author, who may have considered everything he or she wrote as being important.

Exercising Authority

Another example of the difference between the modes of having and being is the exercise of authority. The crucial point is expressed in the difference between *having* authority and *being* an authority. Almost all of us exercise authority at least at some stage of our lives. Those who bring up

children must exercise authority—whether they want to or not—in order to protect their children from dangers and give them at least minimal advice on how to act in various situations. In a patriarchal society women, too, are objects of authority, for most men. Most members of a bureaucratic, hierarchically organized society like ours exercise authority, except the people on the lowest social level, who are only objects of authority.

Our understanding of authority in the two modes depends on our recognizing that "authority" is a broad term with two entirely different meanings: it can be either "rational" or "irrational" authority. Rational authority is based on competence, and it helps the person who leans on it to grow. Irrational authority is based on power and serves to exploit the person subjected to it. (I have discussed this distinction in *Escape from Freedom.)*

Among the most primitive societies, i.e., the hunters and food gatherers, authority is exercised by the person who is generally recognized as being competent for the task. What qualities this competence rests on depends much on the specific circumstances; generally they include experience, wisdom, generosity, skill, "presence," courage. No permanent authority exists in many of these tribes, but an authority emerges in the case of need. Or there are different authorities for different occasions: war, religious practice, adjustment of quarrels. When the qualities on which the authority rests disappear or weaken, the authority itself ends. A very similar form of authority may be observed among many primate societies, in which competence is often established not by physical strength but by such qualities as experience and "wisdom." In a very ingenious experiment with monkeys, J. M. R. Delgado (1967) has shown that if the dominant animal even momentarily loses the qualities that constitute its competence, its authority ends.

Being-authority is grounded not only in the individual's competence to fulfill certain social functions, but equally so in the very essence of a personality that has achieved a high degree of growth and integration. Such persons radiate authority and do not have to give orders, threaten, bribe. They are highly developed individuals who demonstrate by what they are—and not mainly by what they do or say—what human beings can be. The great Masters of Living were such authorities, and to a lesser degree of perfection, such individuals may be found on all educational levels and in the most diverse cultures. (The problem of education hinges on this point. If parents were more developed themselves and rested in their own center, the

opposition between authoritarian and laissez-faire education would hardly exist. Needing this being-authority, the child reacts to it with great eagerness; on the other hand, the child rebels against pressure or neglect by people who show by their own behavior that they themselves have not made the effort they expect from the growing child.)

With the formation of societies based on a hierarchical order and much larger and more complex than those of the hunters and food gatherers, authority by competence yields to authority by social status. This does not mean that the existing authority is necessarily incompetent; it does mean that competence is not an essential element of authority. Whether we deal with monarchical authority—where the lottery of genes decides qualities of competence—or with an unscrupulous criminal who succeeds in becoming an authority by murder or treachery, or, as frequently in modern democracy, with authorities elected on the basis of their photogenic physiognomy or the amount of money they can spend on their election, in all these cases there may be almost no relation between competence and authority.

But there are even serious problems in the cases of authority established on the basis of some competence: a leader may have been competent in one field, incompetent in another—for instance, a statesman may be competent in conducting war and incompetent in the situation of peace; or a leader who is honest and courageous at the beginning of his or her career loses these qualities by the seduction of power; or age or physical troubles may lead to a certain deterioration. Finally, one must consider that it is much easier for the members of a small tribe to judge the behavior of an authority than it is for the millions of people in our system, who know their candidate only by the artificial image created by public relations specialists.

Whatever the reasons for the loss of the competence-forming qualities, in most larger and hierarchically organized societies the process of alienation of authority occurs. The real or alleged initial competence is transferred to the uniform or to the title of the authority. If the authority wears the proper uniform or has the proper title, this external sign of competence replaces the real competence and its qualities. The king—to use this title as a symbol for this type of authority—can be stupid, vicious, evil, i.e., utterly incompetent to *be* an authority, yet he *has* authority. As long as he has the title, he is supposed to have the qualities of competence. Even if the emperor is naked, everybody believes he wears beautiful clothes.

That people take uniforms and titles for the real qualities of competence is not something that happens quite of itself. Those who have these symbols of authority and those who benefit therefrom must dull their subject people's realistic, i.e., critical, thinking and make them believe the fiction. Anybody who will think about it knows the machinations of propaganda, the methods by which critical judgment is destroyed, how the mind is lulled into submission by clichés, how people are made dumb because they become dependent and lose their capacity to trust their eyes and judgment. They are blinded to reality by the fiction they believe.

Having Knowledge and Knowing

The difference between the mode of having and the mode of being in the sphere of *knowing* is expressed in two formulations: "I have knowledge" and "I know." *Having* knowledge is taking and keeping possession of available knowledge (information); *knowing* is functional and part of the process of productive thinking.

Our understanding of the quality of knowing in the being mode of existence can be enhanced by the insights of such thinkers as the Buddha, the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, Master Eckhart, Sigmund Freud, and Karl Marx. In their view, knowing begins with the awareness of the deceptiveness of our common sense perceptions, in the sense that our picture of physical reality does not correspond to what is "really real" and, mainly, in the sense that most people are half-awake, half-dreaming, and are unaware that most of what they hold to be true and self-evident is illusion produced by the suggestive influence of the social world in which they live. Knowing, then, begins with the shattering of illusions, with *dis*illusionment *(Ent-täuschung).* Knowing means to penetrate through the surface, in order to arrive at the roots, and hence the causes; knowing means to "see" reality in its nakedness. Knowing does not mean to be in possession of the truth; it means to penetrate the surface and to strive critically and actively in order to approach truth ever more closely.

This quality of creative penetration is expressed in the Hebrew *jadoa,* which means to know and to love, in the sense of male sexual penetration. The Buddha, the Awakened One, calls on people to wake up and liberate themselves from the illusion that craving for things leads to happiness. The Hebrew prophets appeal to the people to wake up and know that their idols

are nothing but the work of their own hands, are illusions. Jesus says: “The truth shall make you free!” Master Eckhart expressed his concept of knowing many times; for instance, when speaking of God he says: “Knowledge is no particular thought but rather it peels off [all coverings] and is disinterested and runs naked to God, until it touches him and grasps him” (Blakney, p. 243). (“Nakedness” and “naked” are favorite expressions of Master Eckhart as well as of his contemporary, the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*.) According to Marx, one needs to destroy illusions in order to create the conditions that make illusions unnecessary. Freud’s concept of self-knowledge is based on the idea of destroying illusions (“rationalizations”) in order to become aware of the unconscious reality. (The last of the Enlightenment thinkers, Freud can be called a revolutionary thinker in terms of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosophy, not in terms of the twentieth century.)

All these thinkers were concerned with human salvation; they were all critical of socially accepted thought patterns. To them the aim of knowing is not the certainty of “absolute truth,” something one can feel secure with, but *the self-affirming process of human reason.* Ignorance, for the one who *knows*, is as good as knowledge, since both are part of the process of knowing, even though ignorance of this kind is different from the ignorance of the unthinking. Optimum knowledge in the being mode is *to know more deeply.* In the having mode it is *to have more knowledge.*

Our education generally tries to train people to *have* knowledge as a possession, by and large commensurate with the amount of property or social prestige they are likely to have in later life. The minimum they receive is the amount they will need in order to function properly in their work. In addition they are each given a “luxury-knowledge package” to enhance their feeling of worth, the size of each such package being in accord with the person’s probable social prestige. The schools are the factories in which these overall knowledge packages are produced—although schools usually claim they mean to bring the students in touch with the highest achievements of the human mind. Many undergraduate colleges are particularly adroit in nurturing these illusions. From Indian thought and art to existentialism and surrealism, a vast smörgåsbord of knowledge is offered from which students pick a little here, a little there, and in the name of spontaneity and freedom are not urged to concentrate on

one subject, not even ever to finish reading an entire book. (Ivan Illich's radical critique of the school system brings many of its failings into focus.)

Faith

In a religious, political, or personal sense the concept of faith can have two entirely different meanings, depending upon whether it is used in the having mode or in the being mode.

Faith, in the having mode, is the possession of an answer for which one has no rational proof. It consists of formulations created by others, which one accepts because one submits to those others—usually a bureaucracy. It carries the feeling of certainty because of the real (or only imagined) power of the bureaucracy. It is the entry ticket to join a large group of people. It relieves one of the hard task of thinking for oneself and making decisions. One becomes one of the *beati possidentes,* the happy owners of the right faith. Faith, in the having mode, gives certainty; it claims to pronounce ultimate, unshakable knowledge, which is believable because the power of those who promulgate and protect the faith seems unshakable. Indeed, who would not choose certainty, if all it requires is to surrender one's independence?

God, originally a symbol for the highest value that we can experience within us, becomes, in the having mode, an idol. In the prophetic concept, an idol is a *thing* that we ourselves make and project our own powers into, thus impoverishing ourselves. We then submit to our creation and by our submission are in touch with ourselves in an alienated form. While I can *have* the idol because it is a thing, by my submission to it, *it*, simultaneously, has *me.* Once He has become an idol, God's alleged qualities have as little to do with my personal experience as alienated political doctrines do. The idol may be praised as Lord of Mercy, yet any cruelty may be committed in its name, just as the alienated faith in human solidarity may not even raise doubts about committing the most inhuman acts. Faith, in the having mode, is a crutch for those who want to be certain, those who want an answer to life without daring to search for it themselves.

In the being mode, faith is an entirely different phenomenon. Can we live without faith? Must not the nursling have faith in its mother's breast? Must we all not have faith in other beings, in those whom we love, and in ourselves? Can we live without faith in the validity of norms for our life?

Indeed, without faith we become sterile, hopeless, afraid to the very core of our being.

Faith, in the being mode, is not, in the first place, a belief in certain ideas (although it may be that, too) but an inner orientation, an *attitude.* It would be better to say that one is *in* faith than that one *has* faith. (The theological distinction between faith that is belief *[fides quae creditur]* and faith *as* belief *[fides qua creditur]* reflects a similar distinction between the *content* of faith and the *act* of faith.) One can be in faith toward oneself and toward others, and the religious person can be in faith toward God. The God of the Old Testament is, first of all, a negation of idols, of gods whom one can *have.* Though conceived in analogy to an Oriental king, the concept of God transcends itself from the very beginning. God must not have a name; no image must be made of God.

Later on, in Jewish and Christian development, the attempt is made to achieve the complete de-idolization of God, or rather to fight the danger of idolization by postulating that not even God's qualities can be stated. Or most radically in Christian mysticism—from (Pseudo) Dionysius Areopagita to the unknown author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and to Master Eckhart—the concept of God tends to be that of the One, the "Godhead" (the No-thing), thus joining views expressed in the Vedas and in Neoplatonic thinking. This faith in God is vouched for by inner experience of the divine qualities in oneself; it is a continuous, active process of self-creation—or, as Master Eckhart puts it, of Christ's eternally being born within ourselves.

My faith in myself, in another, in humankind, in our capacity to become fully human also implies certainty, but certainty based on my own experience and not on my submission to an authority that dictates a certain belief. It is certainty of a truth that cannot be proven by rationally compelling evidence, yet truth I am certain of because of my experiential, subjective evidence. (The Hebrew word for faith is *emunah*, "certainty"; *amen* means "certainly.")

If I am certain of a man's integrity, I could not prove his integrity up to his last day; strictly speaking, if his integrity remains inviolate to the time of his death, even that would not exclude a positivistic standpoint that he might have violated if had he lived longer. My certainty rests upon the knowledge in depth I have of the other and of my own experience of love and integrity. This kind of knowledge is possible only to the extent that I

can drop my own ego and see the other man in *his* suchness, recognize the structure of forces in him, see him in his individuality and at the same time in his universal humanity. Then I know what the other can do, what he cannot do, and what he will not do. Of course, I do not mean by this that I could predict all his future behavior, but only the general lines of behavior that are rooted in basic character traits, such as integrity, responsibility, etc. (See the chapter on "Faith as a Character Trait" in *Man for Himself.)*

This faith is based on facts; hence it is rational. But the facts are not recognizable or "provable" by the method of conventional, positivistic psychology; I, the alive person, am the only instrument that can "register" them.

Loving

Loving also has two meanings, depending upon whether it is spoken of in the mode of having or in the mode of being.

Can one *have* love? If we could, love would need to be a thing, a substance that one can have, own, possess. The truth is, there is no such thing as "love." "Love" is an abstraction, perhaps a goddess or an alien being, although nobody has ever seen this goddess. In reality, there exists only the *act of loving.* To love is a productive activity. It implies caring for, knowing, responding, affirming, enjoying: the person, the tree, the painting, the idea. It means bringing to life, increasing his/her/its aliveness. It is a process, self-renewing and self-increasing.

When love is experienced in the mode of having it implies confining, imprisoning, or controlling the object one "loves." It is strangling, deadening, suffocating, killing, not life-giving. What people *call* love is mostly a misuse of the word, in order to hide the reality of their not loving. How many parents love their children is still an entirely open question. Lloyd de Mause has brought out that for the past two millennia of Western history there have been reports of cruelty against children, ranging from physical to psychic torture, carelessness, sheer possessiveness, and sadism, so shocking that one must believe that loving parents are the exception rather than the rule.

The same may be said of marriages. Whether their marriage is based on love or, like traditional marriages of the past, on social convenience and custom, the couple who truly love each other seem to be the exception.

What is social convenience, custom, mutual economic interest, shared interest in children, mutual dependency, or mutual hate or fear is consciously experienced as “love”—up to the moment when one or both partners recognize that they do not love each other, and that they never did. Today one can note some progress in this respect: people have become more realistic and sober, and many no longer feel that being sexually attracted means to love, or that a friendly, though distant, team relationship is a manifestation of loving. This new outlook has made for greater honesty—as well as more frequent change of partners. It has not necessarily led to a greater frequency of loving, and the new partners may love as little as did the old.

The change from “falling in love” to the illusion of “having” love can often be observed in concrete detail in the history of couples who have “fallen in love.” (In *The Art of Loving* I pointed out that the word “falling” in the phrase “falling in love” is a contradiction in itself. Since loving is a productive activity, one can only *stand* in love or *walk* in love; one cannot “fall” in love, for falling denotes passivity.)

During courtship neither person is yet sure of the other, but each tries to win the other. Both are alive, attractive, interesting, even beautiful—inasmuch as aliveness always makes a face beautiful. Neither yet *has* the other; hence each one’s energy is directed to *being*, i.e., to giving to and stimulating the other. With the act of marriage the situation frequently changes fundamentally. The marriage contract gives each partner the exclusive possession of the other’s body, feelings, and care. Nobody has to be won over any more, because love has become something one *has*, a property. The two cease to make the effort to be lovable and to produce love, hence they become boring, and hence their beauty disappears. They are disappointed and puzzled. Are they not the same persons any more? Did they make a mistake in the first place? Each usually seeks the cause of the change in the other and feels defrauded. What they do not see is that they no longer are the same people they were when they were in love with each other; that the error that one can *have* love has led them to cease loving. Now, instead of loving each other, they settle for owning together what they have: money, social standing, a home, children. Thus, in some cases, the marriage initiated on the basis of love becomes transformed into a friendly ownership, a corporation in which the two egotisms are pooled into one: that of the “family.”

When a couple cannot get over the yearning for the renewal of the previous feeling of loving, one or the other of the pair may have the illusion that a new partner (or partners) will satisfy their longing. They feel that all they want to have is love. But love to them is not an expression of their being; it is a goddess to whom they want to submit. They necessarily fail with their love because “love is a child of liberty” (as an old French song says), and the worshiper of the goddess of love eventually becomes so passive as to be boring and loses whatever is left of his or her former attractiveness.

This description is not intended to imply that marriage cannot be the best solution for two people who love each other. The difficulty does not lie in marriage, but in the possessive, existential structure of both partners and, in the last analysis, of their society. The advocates of such modern-day forms of living together as group marriage, changing partners, group sex, etc., try, as far as I can see, only to avoid the problem of their difficulties in loving by curing boredom with ever new stimuli and by wanting *to have* more “lovers,” rather than to be able to love even one. (See the discussion of the distinction between “activating” and “passivating” stimuli in Chapter 10 of *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness.)*

III.
Having and Being in the Old and New Testaments and in the Writings of Master Eckhart

The Old Testament

ONE OF THE MAIN THEMES of the Old Testament is: leave what you have; free yourself from all fetters; *be!*

The history of Hebrew tribes begins with the command to the first Hebrew hero, *Abraham*, to give up his country and his clan: "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Abraham is to leave what he has—land and family—and go to the unknown. Yet his descendants settle on a new soil, and new clannishness develops. This process leads to more severe bondage. Precisely because they become rich and powerful in Egypt, they become slaves; they lose the vision of the one God, the God of their nomadic ancestors, and they worship idols, the gods of the rich turned later into their masters.

The second hero is *Moses.* He is charged by God to liberate his people, to lead them out of the country that has become their home (even though eventually a home for slaves), and to go into the desert "to celebrate." Reluctantly and with great misgiving, the Hebrews follow their leader Moses—into the desert.

The desert is the key symbol in this liberation. The desert is no home: it has no cities; it has no riches; it is the place of nomads who own what they need, and what they need are the necessities of life, not possessions. Historically, nomadic traditions are interwoven in the report of the Exodus, and it may very well be that these nomadic traditions have determined the tendency against all nonfunctional property and the choice of life in the desert as preparation for the life of freedom. But these historical factors

only strengthen the meaning of the desert as a symbol of the unfettered, non-propertied life. Some of the main symbols of the Jewish festivals have their origin in the connection with the desert. The *unleavened bread* is the bread of those who are in a hurry to leave; it is the bread of the wanderers. The *suka* ("tabernacle") is the home of the wanderer: the equivalent of the tent, easily built and easily taken down. As defined in the Talmud it is "the transitory abode," to be lived in, instead of the "fixed abode" one owns.

The Hebrews yearn for the fleshpots of Egypt; for the fixed home, for the poor yet guaranteed food; for the visible idols. They fear the uncertainty of the propertyless desert life. They say: "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger" (Exodus: 16:3). God, as in the whole story of liberation, responds to the moral frailty of the people. He promises to feed them: in the morning with "bread," in the evening with quail. He adds two important injunctions: each should gather according to their needs: "And the people of Israel did so; they gathered, some more, some less. But when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; each gathered according to what he could eat" (Exodus 16:17-18).

For the first time, a principle is formulated here that became famous through Marx: to each according to their needs. The right to be fed was established without qualification. God is here the nourishing mother who feeds her children, who do not have to achieve anything in order to establish their right to be fed. The second injunction is one against hoarding, greed, and possessiveness. The people of Israel were enjoined not to save anything till the next morning. "But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them. Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted" (Exodus 16:20-21).

In connection with the collection of food the concept of the observation of the *Shabbat* ("Sabbath") is introduced. Moses tells the Hebrews to collect twice the usual amount of food on Friday: "Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none" (Genesis 16:26).

The Shabbat is the most important of the biblical concepts, and of later Judaism. It is the only strictly religious command in the Ten Commandments: its fulfillment is insisted upon by the otherwise antiritualistic prophets; it was a most strictly observed commandment throughout 2000 years of Diaspora life, wherein its observation often was hard and difficult. It can hardly be doubted that the Shabbat was the fountain of life for the Jews, who, scattered, powerless, and often despised and persecuted, renewed their pride and dignity when like kings they celebrated the Shabbat. Is the Shabbat nothing but a day of rest in the mundane sense of freeing people, at least on one day, from the burden of work? To be sure it is that, and this function gives it the dignity of one of the great innovations in human evolution. Yet if this were all that it was, the Shabbat would hardly have played the central role I have just described.

In order to understand this role we must penetrate to the core of the Shabbat institution. It is not rest *per se*, in the sense of not making an effort, physically or mentally. It is rest in the sense of the re-establishment of complete harmony between human beings and between them and nature. Nothing must be destroyed and nothing be built: the Shabbat is a day of truce in the human battle with the world. Even tearing up a blade of grass is looked upon as a breach of this harmony, as is lighting a match. Neither must social change occur. It is for this reason that carrying anything on the street is forbidden (even if it weighs as little as a handkerchief), while carrying a heavy load in one's garden is permitted. The point is that not the effort of carrying a load is forbidden, but the transfer of any object from one privately owned piece of land to another, because such transfer constituted, originally, a transfer of property. On the Shabbat one lives as if one *has* nothing, pursuing no aim except *being*, that is, expressing one's essential powers: praying, studying, eating, drinking, singing, making love.

The Shabbat is a day of joy because on that day one is fully oneself. This is the reason the Talmud calls a Shabbat the anticipation of the Messianic Time, and the Messianic Time the unending Shabbat: the day on which property and money as well as mourning and sadness are taboo; a day on which time is defeated and pure being rules. The historical predecessor, the Babylonian Shapatu, was a day of sadness and fear. The modern Sunday is a day of fun, consumption, and running away from oneself. One might ask if it is not time to reestablish the Shabbat as a

universal day of harmony and peace, as the human day that anticipates the human future.

The vision of the Messianic Time is the other specifically Jewish contribution to world culture, and one essentially identical with that of the Shabbat. This vision, like the Shabbat, was the life-sustaining hope of the Jews, never given up in spite of the severe disappointments that came with the false messiahs, from Bar Kochba in the second century to our days. Like the Shabbat it was a vision of a historical period in which possession will have become meaningless, fear and war will have ended, and the expression of our essential powers will have become the aim of living.[5]

The history of the Exodus moves to a tragic end. The Hebrews cannot bear to live without *having.* Although they can live without a fixed abode, and without food except that sent by God every day, they cannot live without a visible, present "leader."

Thus when Moses disappears on the mountain, the desperate Hebrews get Aaron to make them a visible manifestation of something they can worship: the Golden Calf. Here, one may say, they pay for God's error in having permitted them to take gold and jewelry out of Egypt. With the gold, they carried within themselves the craving for wealth; and when the hour of despair came, the possessive structure of their existence reasserted itself. Aaron makes them a calf from their gold, and the people say: "These are your Gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4).

A whole generation had died and even Moses was not permitted to enter the new land. But the new generation was as little capable of being unfettered and of living on a land without being bound to it as were their fathers. They conquer new land, exterminate their enemies, settle on their soil, and worship their idols. They transform their democratic tribal life into that of Oriental despotism—small, indeed, but not less eager to imitate the great powers of the day. The revolution had failed; its only achievement was, if it was one, that the Hebrews were now masters and not slaves. They might not even be remembered today, except as a learned footnote in a history of the Near East, had the new message not found expression through revolutionary thinkers and visionaries who were not tainted, as was Moses, by the burden of leadership and specifically by the need to use dictatorial power methods (for instance the wholesale destruction of the rebels under Korach).

These revolutionary thinkers, the Hebrew prophets, renewed the vision of human freedom—of being unfettered of things—and the protest against submitting to idols—the work of the people's own hands. They were uncompromising and predicted that the people would have to be expelled from the land again if they became incestuously fixated to it and incapable of living in it as free people—that is, not able to love it without losing themselves in it. To the prophets the expulsion from the land was a tragedy, but the only way to final liberation; the new desert was to last not for one but for many generations. Even while predicting the new desert, the prophets were sustaining the faith of the Jews, and eventually of the whole human race, by the Messianic vision that promised peace and abundance without requiring the expulsion or extermination of a land's former inhabitants.

The real successors to the Hebrew prophets were the great scholars, the rabbis, and none more clearly so than the founder of the Diaspora: Rabbi Jochanan ben Sakai. When the leaders of the war against the Romans (A.D. 70) had decided that it was better for all to die than to be defeated and lose their state, Rabbi Sakai committed "treason." He secretly left Jerusalem, surrendered to the Roman general, and asked permission to found a Jewish university. This was the beginning of a rich Jewish tradition and, at the same time, of the loss of everything the Jews had *had:* their state, their temple, their priestly and military bureaucracy, their sacrificial animals, and their rituals. All were lost and they were left (as a group) with nothing except the ideal of being: knowing, learning, thinking, and hoping for the Messiah.

The New Testament

The New Testament continues the Old Testament's protest against the having structure of existence. Its protest is even more radical than the earlier Jewish protest had been. The Old Testament was not the product of a poor and downtrodden class, but sprang from nomadic sheep owners and independent peasants. A millennium later, the Pharisees, the learned men whose literary product was the Talmud, represented the middle class, ranging from some very poor to some very well to do members. Both groups were imbued with the spirit of social justice, the protection of the poor, and the assistance to all who were powerless, such as widows and

national minorities *(gerim).* But on the whole, they did not condemn wealth as evil or as incompatible with the principle of being. (See Louis Finkelstein's book on *The Pharisees.)*

Earliest Christians, on the contrary, were mainly a group of the poor and socially despised, of the downtrodden and outcasts, who—like some of the Old Testament prophets—castigated the rich and powerful, denouncing without compromise wealth and secular and priestly power, as unmitigated evils (see *The Dogma of Christ).* Indeed, as Max Weber said, the Sermon on the Mount was the speech of a great slave rebellion. The mood of the early Christians was one of full human solidarity, sometimes expressed in the idea of a spontaneous communal sharing of all material goods. (A. F. Utz discusses the early Christian communal ownership and earlier Greek examples of whom Luke probably knew.)

This revolutionary spirit of early Christianity appears with special clarity in the oldest parts of the gospels as they were known to the Christian communities that still had not separated from Judaism. (Those oldest parts of the gospels can be reconstructed from the common source of Matthew and Luke and are called "Q" [*Q* from German *Quelle,* "source"] by specialists in the history of the New Testament. The fundamental work in this field is by Siegfried Schulz, who differentiates between an older and a younger tradition of "Q")[6]

In these sayings we find as the central postulate that people must free themselves from all greed and cravings for possession and must totally liberate themselves from the structure of having, and conversely, that all positive ethical norms are rooted in an ethics of being, sharing, and solidarity. This basic ethical position is applied both to one's relations to others and to one's relations to things. The radical renunciation of one's own rights (Matthew 5:39-42; Luke 6:29 f.) as well as the command to love one's enemy (Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:27 f., 32-36) stress, even more radically than the Old Testament's "love thy neighbor," full concern for other human beings and complete surrender of all selfishness. The norm not even to judge others (Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 6:37 f., 41 f.) is a further extension of the principle of forgetting one's ego and being totally devoted to the understanding and the well-being of the other.

Also with regard to things, total renunciation of the having structure is demanded. The oldest community insisted on the radical renunciation of property; it warns against collecting riches: "Do not lay up for yourselves

treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6: 19-21; Luke 12:33 f.). It is in the same spirit that Jesus says: "Blessed are you poor for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6:20; Matthew 5:3). Indeed, early Christianity was a community of the poor and the suffering, filled with the apocalyptic conviction that the time had come for the final disappearance of the existing order, according to God's plan of salvation.

The apocalyptic concept of the "Last judgment" was one version of the Messianic idea, current in Jewish circles of the time. Final salvation and judgment would be preceded by a period of chaos and destruction, a period so terrible that we find Talmudic rabbis asking God to spare them living in the pre-Messianic Time. What was new in Christianity was that Jesus and his followers believed that the Time was *now* (or in the near future), and that it had already begun with Jesus' appearance.

Indeed, one cannot help associating the situation of the early Christians with what goes on in the world today. Not a few people, scientists rather than religionists (with the exception of the Jehovah's Witnesses), believe that we might be approaching the final catastrophe of the world. This is a rational and scientifically tenable vision. The situation of the early Christians was quite different. They lived in a small part of the Roman Empire at the height of its power and glory. There were no alarming signs of catastrophe. Yet this small group of poor Palestinian Jews carried the conviction that this powerful world would soon collapse. Realistically, to be sure, they were mistaken; as a result of the failure of Jesus' reappearance, Jesus' death and resurrection are interpreted in the gospels as constituting the beginning of the new eon, and after Constantine an attempt was made to shift the mediating role of Jesus to the papal church. Finally, for all practical purposes the church became the substitute—in fact, though not in theory—for the new eon.

One must take early Christianity more seriously than most people do, in order to be impressed by the almost unbelievable radicalism of this small group of people, who spoke the verdict over the existing world on *nothing but* their moral conviction. The majority of the Jews, on the other hand, not belonging exclusively to the poorest and most downtrodden part of the population, chose another way. They refused to believe that a new era had

begun and continued to wait for the Messiah, who would come when humankind (and not only the Jews) had reached the point where the realm of justice, peace, and love could be established in a historical rather than in an eschatological sense.

The younger "Q" source has its origin in a further stage of development of early Christianity. Here, too, we find the same principle, and the story of Jesus' temptation by Satan expresses it in a very succinct form. In this story, the lust for having things and the craving for power and other manifestations of the having structure are condemned. To the first temptation—to transform stones into bread, symbolically expressing the craving for material things Jesus answers: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). Satan tempts Jesus then with the promise of giving him complete power over nature (changing the law of gravity), and finally, with unrestricted power, dominion over all kingdoms of the earth, and Jesus declines (Matthew 4:5-10; Luke 4: 5-12). (Rainer Funk has called my attention to the fact that the temptation takes place in the desert, thus taking up the topic of the Exodus again.)

Jesus and Satan appear here as representatives of two opposite principles. Satan is the representative of material consumption and of power over nature and Man. Jesus is the representative of being, and of the idea that not-having is the premise for being. The world has followed Satan's principles, since the time of the gospels. Yet even the victory of these principles could not destroy the longing for the realization of full being, expressed by Jesus as well as by many other great Masters who lived before him and after him.

The ethical rigorism of rejection of the having orientation for the sake of the being orientation is to be found also in the Jewish communal orders, such as the Essenes and the order in which the Dead Sea scrolls originated. Throughout the history of Christianity it continues in the religious orders based on the vow of poverty and propertylessness.

Another manifestation of the radical concepts of early Christianity is to be found—in various degrees—in the writings of the church fathers, who in this respect are also influenced by Greek philosophical thought on the subject of private property versus common property. Space does not permit me to discuss these teachings in any detail, and even less the theological and sociological literature on the subject.[7] Although there are some

differences in the degree of radicalism and a certain trend to a less radical view the more the church became a powerful institution, it is undeniable that the early church thinkers shared a sharp condemnation of luxury and avarice and a contempt for wealth.

Justin writes, in the middle of the second century: “We who once loved riches [mobile goods] and possession [land] above everything else, now make that which we already have into common property and share it with the needy.” In a “Letter of Diognetus” (also second century), there is a very interesting passage that reminds us of Old Testament thought about homelessness: “Any alien country is their [the Christians’] fatherland and every fatherland is alien to them.” Tertullian (third century) considered all trade to be the result of cupidity, and he denies its necessity among people who are free from greed. He declares that trade always carries with it the danger of idolatry. Avarice he calls the root of all evil.[8]

For Basilius, as for the other church fathers, the purpose of all material goods is to serve people; characteristic of him is this question: “The one who takes away a garment from another is called a thief; but the one who does not clothe the poor, although he could—does he deserve another name?” (quoted by Utz). Basilius stressed the original community of goods and was understood by some authors to have represented communist tendencies. I conclude this brief sketch with Chrysostomus’ warning (fourth century) that superfluous goods must not be produced or consumed. He says: “Do not say I use what is mine: you use what is alien to you; the indulgent, selfish use makes what is yours something alien; that is why I call it alien good, because you use it with a hardened heart and claim that it is right, that you alone live from what is yours.”

I could go on for many pages quoting the views of the church fathers that private property and the egotistical use of any possession is immoral. Yet even the foregoing few statements indicate the continuity of the rejection of the having orientation as we find it from Old Testament times, throughout early Christianity, and into the later centuries. Even Aquinas, battling against the openly communist sects, concludes that the institution of private property is justified only inasmuch as it best serves the purposes of satisfying the welfare of all.

Classic Buddhism emphasizes even more strongly than the Old and New Testaments the central importance of giving up craving for possessions

of any kind, including one's own ego, the concept of a lasting substance, and even the craving for one's perfection.[9]

Master Eckhart (1260-c. 1327)

Eckhart has described and analyzed the difference between the having and being modes of existence with a penetration and clarity not surpassed by any teacher. A major figure of the Dominican Order in Germany, Eckhart was a scholarly theologian and the greatest representative and deepest and most radical thinker of German mysticism. His greatest influence radiated from his German sermons, which affected not only his contemporaries and disciples but also German mystics after him and, today, those seeking authentic guidance to a non-theistic, rational, yet religious, philosophy of life.

My sources for the Eckhart quotations that follow are Joseph L. Quint's great Eckhart work *Meister Eckhart, Die Deutschen Werke* (referred to here as "Quint D.W."), his *Meister Eckhart, Deutsche Predigten and Traktate* (referred to as "Quint D.P.T."), and the English translation by Raymond B. Blakney, *Meister Eckhart* (referred to here as "Blakney"). It should be noted that while Quint's editions contain only the passages he considers have been proven authentic so far, the Blakney text (translated from the German, Pfeiffer, edition) includes writings whose authenticity (Quint has not yet acknowledged. Quint himself has pointed out, however, that his recognition of authenticity is provisional, that very likely many of the other works that have been attributed to Master Eckhart will also be proven authentic. The italicized numbers that appear with the source notes refer to the Eckhart sermons as they are identified in the three sources.

Eckhart's Concept of Having

The classic source for Eckhart's views on the mode of having is his sermon on poverty, based on the text of Matthew 5:13: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." In this sermon Eckhart discusses the question: What is spiritual poverty? He begins by saying that he does not speak of *external* poverty, a poverty of things, although that kind of poverty is good and commendable. He wants to speak of *inner* poverty, the poverty referred to in the gospel verse, which he defines by

saying: “He is a poor man who *wants* nothing, *knows* nothing and *has* nothing” (Blakney, *28*; Quint D.W., *52*; Quint D.P.T., *32*).

Who is the person who *wants* nothing? A man or woman who has chosen an ascetic life would be our common response. But this is not Eckhart’s meaning, and he scolds those who understand not wanting anything as an exercise of repentance and an external religious practice. He sees the subscribers to that concept as people who hold onto their selfish egos. “These people have the name of being saintly on the basis of the external appearances, but inside they are asses, because they don’t grasp the true meaning of divine truth” (my translation of Quint’s text).

For Eckhart is concerned with the kind of “wanting” that is also fundamental in Buddhist thought; that is, greed, craving for things and for one’s own ego. The Buddha considers this wanting (attachment, craving) to be the cause of human suffering, not of enjoyment. When Eckhart goes on to speak of having no will, he does not mean that one should be weak. The will he speaks of is identical with craving, a will that one is *driven* by—that is, in a true sense, *not* will. Eckhart goes as far as to postulate that one should not even want to do God’s will—since this, too, is a form of craving. *The person who wants nothing is the person who is not greedy for anything:* this is the essence of Eckhart’s concept of nonattachment.

Who is the person who *knows* nothing? Does Eckhart establish that it is one who is an ignorant dumb being, an uneducated, uncultured creature? How could he, when his main effort was to educate the uneducated and when he himself was a man of great erudition and knowledge that he never attempts to hide or minimize?

Eckhart’s concept of *not knowing anything* is concerned with the difference between *having* knowledge and the *act* of *knowing*, i.e., penetrating to the roots and, hence, to the causes of a thing. Eckhart distinguishes very clearly between a particular thought and the process of thinking. Stressing that it is better to know God than to love God, he writes: “Love has to do with desire and purpose, whereas knowledge is no particular thought, but rather it peels off all [coverings] and is disinterested and runs naked to God, until it touches him and grasps him” (Blakney, Fragment 27; not authenticated by Quint).

But on another level (and Eckhart speaks throughout on several levels) Eckhart goes much further. He writes:

> Again, he is poor who knows nothing. We have sometimes said that man ought to live as if he did not live, neither for self, nor for the truth, nor for God. But to that point, we shall say something else and go further. The man who is to achieve this poverty shall live as a man who does not even know that he lives, neither for himself, nor for the truth, nor for god. More; he shall be quit and empty of all knowledge, so that no knowledge of god exists in him; for when a man's existence is of God's external species, there is no other life in him: his life is himself. Therefore we say that a man ought to be empty of his own knowledge, as he was when he did not exist, and let God achieve what he will and man be unfettered (Blakney, *28*; (Quint D.W., *52*; Quint D.P.T., *32*; a small portion is my translation of Quint's German text).[10]

To understand Eckhart's position, it is necessary to grasp the true meaning of these words. When he says that "a man ought to be empty of his own knowledge," he does not mean that one should forget *what* one knows, but rather one should forget *that* one knows. This is to say that we should not look at our knowledge as a possession, in which we find security and which gives us a sense of identity; we should not be "filled" with our knowledge, or hang onto it, or crave it. Knowledge should not assume the quality of a dogma, which enslaves us. All this belongs to the mode of having. In the mode of being, knowledge is nothing but the penetrating activity of thought —without ever becoming an invitation to stand still in order to find certainty. Eckhart continues:

> What does it mean that a man should *have* nothing?
>
> Now pay earnest attention to this: I have often said, and great authorities agree, that to be a proper abode for God and fit for God to act in, a man should also be free from all [his own] things and [his own] actions, both inwardly and outwardly. Now we shall say something else. If it is the case that a man is emptied of things, creatures, himself and god, and if still God could find a place in him to act, then we say: As long as that [place] exists, this man is not poor with the most intimate poverty. For God does not intend that man shall have a place reserved for God to work in, since true poverty of spirit requires that man shall be emptied of God and all his works, so that if

> God wants to act in the soul, he himself must be the place in which he acts—and that he would like to do … Thus we say that a man should be so poor that he is not and has not a place for God to act in. To reserve a place would be to maintain distinctions. *Therefore I pray God that he may quit me of god"* (Blakney, pp. 230-231).

Eckhart could not have expressed his concept of not having more radically. First of all, we should be free from our own things and our own actions. This does not mean that we should neither possess anything nor do anything; it means we should not be bound, tied, chained to what we own and what we have, not even to God.

Eckhart approaches the problems of having on another level when he discusses the relation between possession and freedom. Human freedom is restricted to the extent to which we are bound to possession, works, and lastly, to our own egos. By being bound to our egos (Quint translates the original middle-German *Eigenschaft* as *Ich-bindung* or *Ichsucht*, "egoboundness" or "egomania"), we stand in our own way and are blocked from bearing fruit, from realizing ourselves fully (Quint D.P.T., Introduction, p. 29). D. Mieth, in my opinion, is entirely right when he maintains that freedom as a condition of true productivity is nothing but giving up one's ego, as love in the Paulinian sense is free from all egoboundness. Freedom in the sense of being unfettered, free from the craving for holding onto things and one's ego, is the condition for love and for productive being. Our human aim, according to Eckhart, is to get rid of the fetters of egoboundness, egocentricity, that is to say the *having mode* of existence, in order to arrive at full being. I have not found any author whose thoughts about the nature of the having orientation in Eckhart are as similar to my own thinking as those expressed by Mieth (1971). He speaks of the *Besitzstruktur des Menschen* ("the property structure of the people") in the same way, as far as I can see, that I speak of the "having mode," or the "having structure of existence." He refers to the Marxian concept of "expropriation," when he speaks of the breakthrough of one's own inner property structure, adding that it is the most radical form of expropriation.

In the having mode of existence what matters is not the various *objects* of having, but our whole attitude. Everything and anything can become an object of craving: things we use in daily life, property, rituals, good deeds, knowledge, and thoughts. While they are not in themselves "bad," they

become bad; that is, when we hold onto them, when they become chains that interfere with our freedom, they block our self-realization.

Eckhart's Concept of Being

Eckhart uses being in two different, though related, meanings. In a narrower, psychological sense, being denotes the *real* and often unconscious motivations that impel human beings, in contrast to deeds and opinions as such and separated from the acting and thinking person. Quint justly calls Eckhart an extraordinary analyst of the soul *(genialer Seelenanalytiker):* "Eckhart never tires of uncovering the most secret ties of human behavior, the most hidden stirring of selfishness, of intentions and opinions, of denouncing the passionate longing for gratitude and rewards" (Quint D.P.T., Introduction, p. 29; my translation). This insight into the hidden motives makes Eckhart most appealing to the post-Freudian reader, who has overcome the naïveté of pre-Freudian and still current behavioristic views, which claim that behavior and opinion are two final data that can be as little broken down as the atom was supposed to be at the beginning of this century. Eckhart expressed this view in numerous statements, of which the following is characteristic: "People should not consider so much what they are to *do* as what they *are.* … Thus take care that your emphasis is laid on *being* good and not on the number or kind of things to be done. Emphasize rather the fundamentals on which your work rests." Our being is the reality, the spirit that moves us, the character that impels our behavior; in contrast, the deeds or opinions that are separated from our dynamic core have no reality.

The second meaning is wider and more fundamental: being is life, activity, birth, renewal, outpouring, flowing out, productivity. In this sense, being is the opposite of having, of egoboundness and egotism. Being, to Eckhart, means to be active in the classic sense of the productive expression of one's human powers, not in the modern sense of being busy. Activity to him means "to go out of oneself" (Quint D.P.T., *6;* my translation), which he expresses in many word pictures: he calls being a process of "boiling," of "giving birth," something that "flows and flows in itself and beyond itself" (E. Benz et al., quoted in Quint D.P.T., p. 35; my translation). Sometimes he uses the symbol of running in order to indicate the active character: "Run into peace! The man who is in the state of running, of

continuous running into peace is a heavenly man. He continually runs and moves and seeks peace in running" (Quint D.P.T., *8;* my translation). Another definition of activity is: The active, alive man is like a "vessel that grows as it is filled and will never be full" (Blakney, p. 233; not authenticated by Quint).

Breaking through the mode of having is the condition for all genuine activity. In Eckhart's ethical system the supreme virtue is the state of productive inner activity, for which the premise is the overcoming of all forms of egoboundness and craving.

PART TWO

ANALYZING THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO MODES OF EXISTENCE

IV.
What Is the Having Mode?

The Acquisitive Society—Basis for the Having Mode

OUR JUDGMENTS ARE EXTREMELY biased because we live in a society that rests on private property, profit, and power as the pillars of its existence. To acquire, to own, and to make a profit are the sacred and unalienable rights of the individual in the industrial society.[11] What the sources of property are does not matter; nor does possession impose any obligations on the property owners. The principle is: "Where and how my property was acquired or what I do with it is nobody's business but my own; as long as I do not violate the law, my right is unrestricted and absolute."

This kind of property may be called *private* property (from Latin *privare*, "to deprive of"), because the person or persons who own it are its sole masters, with full power to deprive others of its use or enjoyment. While private ownership is supposed to be a natural and universal category, it is in fact an exception rather than the rule if we consider the whole of human history (including prehistory), and particularly the cultures outside Europe in which economy was not life's main concern. Aside from private property, there are: *self-created* property, which is exclusively the result of one's own work; *restricted property*, which is *restricted* by the obligation to help one's fellow beings; *functional*, or *personal*, property, which consists either of tools for work or of objects for enjoyment; *common* property, which a group shares in the spirit of a common bond, such as the Israeli kibbutzim.

The norms by which society functions also mold the character of its members ("social character"). In an industrial society these are: the wish to acquire property, to keep it, and to increase it, i.e., to make a profit, and those who own property are admired and envied as superior beings. But the vast majority of people own no property in a real sense of capital and

capital goods, and the puzzling question arises: How can such people fulfill or even cope with their passion for acquiring and keeping property, or how can they feel like owners of property when they haven't any property to speak of?

Of course, the obvious answer is that even people who are property poor own *something*—and they cherish their little possessions as much as the owners of capital cherish their property. And like the big property owners, the poor are obsessed by the wish to preserve what they do have and to increase it, even though by an infinitesimal amount (for instance by saving a penny here, two cents there).

Furthermore the greatest enjoyment is perhaps not so much in owning material things but in owning living beings. In a patriarchal society even the most miserable of men in the poorest of classes can be an owner of property—in his relationship to his wife, his children, his animals, over whom he can feel he is absolute master. At least for the man in a patriarchal society, having many children is the only way to own persons without needing to work to attain ownership, and with little capital investment. Considering that the whole burden of childbearing is the woman's, it can hardly be denied that the production of children in a patriarchal society is a matter of crude exploitation of women. In turn, however, the mothers have their own form of ownership, that of the children when they are small. The circle is endless and vicious: the husband exploits the wife, she exploits the small children, and the adolescent males soon join the elder men in exploiting the women, and so on.

The male hegemony in a patriarchal order has lasted roughly six or seven millennia and still prevails in the poorest countries and among the poorest classes of society. It is, however, slowly diminishing in the more affluent societies—emancipation of women, children, and adolescents seems to take place when and to the degree that a society's standard of living rises. With the slow collapse of the old-fashioned, patriarchal type of ownership of persons, in what will the average citizens of the fully developed industrial societies now find fulfillment of their passion for acquiring, keeping, and increasing property? The answer lies in extending the area of ownership to include friends, lovers, health, travel, art objects, God, one's own ego. A brilliant picture of the bourgeois obsession with property is given by Max Stirner. Persons are transformed into things; their relations to each other assume the character of ownership. "Individualism,"

which in its positive sense means liberation from social chains, means, in the negative sense, “self-ownership,” the right—and the duty—to invest one’s energy in the success of one’s own person.

Our ego is the most important object of our property feeling, for it comprises many things: our body, our name, our social status, our possessions (including our knowledge), the image we have of ourselves and the image we want others to have of us. Our ego is a mixture of real qualities, such as knowledge and skills, and of certain fictitious qualities that we build around a core of reality. But the essential point is not so much what the ego’s content is, but that the ego is felt as a thing we each possess, and that this “thing” is the basis of our sense of identity.

This discussion of property must take into account that an important form of property attachment that flourished in the nineteenth century has been diminishing in the decades since the end of the First World War and is little evident today. In the older period, everything one owned was cherished, taken care of, and used to the very limits of its utility. Buying was “keep-it” buying, and a motto for the nineteenth century might well have been: “Old is beautiful!” Today, consumption is emphasized, not preservation, and buying has become “throw-away” buying. Whether the object one buys is a car, a dress, a gadget, after using it for some time, one gets tired of it and is eager to dispose of the “old” and buy the latest model. Acquisition —> transitory having and using —> throwing away (or if possible, profitable exchange for a better model) —> new acquisition, constitutes the vicious circle of consumer-buying and today’s motto could indeed be: “New is beautiful!”

Perhaps the most striking example of today’s consumer buying phenomenon is the private automobile. Our age deserves to be dubbed “the age of the automobile,” for our whole economy has been built around automobile production, and our whole life is greatly determined by the rise and fall of the consumer market for cars.

To those who have one, their car seems like a vital necessity; to those who do not yet own one, especially people in the so-called socialist states, a car is a symbol of happiness. Apparently, however, affection for one’s car is not deep and abiding, but a love affair of somewhat short duration, for owners change their cars frequently; after two years, even after just one, an auto owner tires of the “old car” and starts shopping around for a “good deal” on a new vehicle. From shopping around to purchase, the whole

transaction seems to be a game in which even trickery is sometimes a prime element, and the "good deal" is enjoyed as much as, if not more than, the ultimate prize: that brand-new model in the driveway.

Several factors must be taken into account in order to solve the puzzle of the seemingly flagrant contradiction between the owners' property relationship to their automobiles and their so-short-lived interest in them. First, there is the element of depersonalization in the owner's relationship to the car; the car is not a concrete object that its owner is fond of, but a status symbol, an extension of power—an ego builder; having acquired a car, the owner has actually acquired a new piece of ego. A second factor is that buying a new car every two years instead of, say, every six increases the buyer's thrill of acquisition; the act of making the new car one's own is a kind of defloration—it enhances one's sense of control, and the more often it happens, the more thrilled one is. The third factor is that frequent car buying means frequent opportunities to "make a deal"—to make a profit by the exchange—a satisfaction deeply rooted in men and women today. The fourth factor is one of great importance: the need to experience *new* stimuli, because the old stimuli are flat and exhausted after but a short while. In an earlier discussion of stimuli *(The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness),* I differentiated between "activating" and "passivating" stimuli and suggested the following formulation: "The more 'passivating' a stimulus is, the more frequently it must be changed in intensity and/or in kind; the more 'activating' it is, the longer it retains its stimulating quality and the less necessary is change in intensity and content." The fifth and most important factor lies in the change in social character that has occurred during the last 100 years, i.e., from the "hoarding" to the "marketing" character. While the change does not do away with the having orientation, it does modify it considerably. (This development from the hoarding to the marketing character is discussed in Chapter VII)

The proprietary feeling also shows up in other relationships, for example toward doctors, dentists, lawyers, bosses, workers. People express it in speaking of "*my* doctor," "*my* dentist," "*my* workers," and so on. But aside from their property attitude toward other human beings, people experience an unending number of objects, even feelings, as property. Take health and illness, for example. People who discuss their health do so with a proprietary feeling, referring to *their* sicknesses, *their* operations, *their* treatments—*their* diets, *their* medicines. They clearly consider that health

and sickness are property; their property relationship to their bad health is analogous, say, to that of a stockholder whose shares are losing part of their original value in a badly falling market.

Ideas and beliefs can also become property, as can even habits. For instance, anyone who eats an identical breakfast at the same time each morning can be disturbed by even a slight change in that routine, because his habit has become a property whose loss endangers his security.

The picture of the universality of the having mode of existence may strike many readers as too negative and one-sided; and indeed it is. I wanted to portray the socially prevalent attitude first in order to give as clear a picture as possible. But there is another element that can give this picture a degree of balance, and that is a growing attitude among the young generation that is quite different from the majority. Among these young people we find patterns of consumption that are not hidden forms of acquisition and having, but expressions of genuine joy in doing what one likes to do without expecting anything "lasting" in return. These young people travel long distances, often with hardships, to hear music they like, to see a place they want to see, to meet people they want to meet. Whether their aims are as valuable as they think they are is not the question here; even if they are without sufficient seriousness, preparation, or concentration, these young people dare to *be*, and they are not interested in what they get in return or what they can keep. They also seem much more sincere than the older generation, although often philosophically and politically naive. They do not polish their egos all the time in order to be a desirable "object" on the market. They do not protect their image by constantly lying, with or without knowing it; they do not expend their energy in repressing truth, as the majority does. And frequently, they impress their elders by their honesty—for their elders secretly admire people who can see and tell the truth. Among them are politically and religiously oriented groups of all shadings, but also many without any particular ideology or doctrine who may say of themselves that they are just "searching." While they may not have found themselves, or a goal that gives guidance to the practice of life, they are searching to be themselves instead of having and consuming.

This positive element in the picture needs to be qualified, however. Many of these same young people (and their number has been markedly decreasing since the late sixties) had not progressed from freedom *from* to

freedom *to;* they simply rebelled without attempting to find a goal toward which to move, except that of freedom from restrictions and dependence. Like that of their bourgeois parents, their motto was “New is beautiful!” and they developed an almost phobic disinterest in all tradition, including the thoughts that the greatest minds have produced. In a kind of naïve narcissism they believed that they could discover by themselves all that is worth discovering. Basically, their ideal was to become small children again, and such authors as Marcuse produced the convenient ideology that return to childhood—not development to maturity—is the ultimate goal of socialism and revolution. They were happy as long as they were young enough for this euphoria to last; but many of them have passed this period with severe disappointment, without having acquired well-founded convictions, without a center within themselves. They often end up as disappointed, apathetic persons—or as unhappy fanatics of destruction.

Not all who had started with great hopes ended up with disappointment, however, but it is unfortunately impossible to know what their number is. To my knowledge, no valid statistical data or sound estimates are available, and even if they were available, it is almost impossible to be sure how to qualify the individuals. Today, millions of people in America and Europe try to find contact with tradition and with teachers who can show them the way. But in large part the doctrines and teachers are either fraudulent, or vitiated by the spirit of public relations ballyhoo, or mixed up with the financial and prestige interests of the respective gurus. Some people may genuinely benefit from such methods in spite of the sham; others will apply them without any serious intention of inner change. But only a detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis of the new believers could show how many belong to each group.

My personal estimate is that the young people (and some older ones) who are seriously concerned with changing from the having to the being mode number more than a few dispersed individuals. I believe that quite a large number of groups and individuals are moving in the direction of being, that they represent a new trend transcending the having orientation of the majority, and that they are of historical significance. It will not be the first time in history that a minority indicates the course that historical development will take. The existence of this minority gives hope for the general change in attitude from having to being. This hope is all the more real since some of the factors that made it possible for these new attitudes to

emerge are historical changes that can hardly be reversed: the breakdown of patriarchal supremacy over women and of parents' domination of the young. While the political revolution of the twentieth century, the Russian revolution, has failed (it is too early to judge the final outcome of the Chinese revolution), the victorious revolutions of our century, even though they are only in their first stages, are the women's, the children's, and the sexual revolutions. Their principles have already been accepted by the consciousness of a great many individuals, and every day the old ideologies become more ridiculous.

The Nature of Having

The nature of the having mode of existence follows from the nature of private property. In this mode of existence all that matters is my acquisition of property and my unlimited right to keep what I have acquired. The having mode excludes others; it does not require any further effort on my part to keep my property or to make productive use of it. The Buddha has described this mode of behavior as craving, the Jewish and Christian religions as coveting; it transforms everybody and everything into something dead and subject to another's power.

The sentence "I have something" expresses the relation between the subject, *I* (or he, we, you, they), and the object, *O*. It implies that the subject is permanent and the object is permanent. But is there permanence in the subject? Or in the object? I shall die; I may lose the social position that guarantees my having something. The object is similarly not permanent: it can be destroyed, or it can be lost, or it can lose its value. Speaking of having something permanently rests upon the illusion of a permanent and indestructible substance. If I seem to have everything, I have—in reality—nothing, since my having, possessing, controlling an object is only a transitory moment in the process of living.

In the last analysis, the statement "*I* [subject] have *O* [object]" expresses a definition of *I* through my possession of *O*. The subject is not *myself* but *I am what I have*. My property constitutes myself and my identity. The underlying thought in the statement "I am I" is *"I am I because I have X"*—X equaling all natural objects and persons to whom I relate myself through my power to control them, to make them permanently mine.

In the having mode, there is no alive relationship between me and what I have. It and I have become things, and I have *it,* because I have the force to make it mine. But there is also a reverse relationship: *it has me,* because my sense of identity, i.e., of sanity, rests upon my having *it* (and as many things as possible). The having mode of existence is not established by an alive, productive process between subject and object; it makes *things* of both object and subject. The relationship is one of deadness, not aliveness.

Having—Force—Rebellion

The tendency to grow in terms of their own nature is common to all living beings. Hence we resist any attempt to prevent our growing in the ways determined by our structure. In order to break this resistance, whether it is conscious or not, physical or mental force is necessary. Inanimate objects resist control of their physical composition in various degrees through the energy inherent in their atomic and molecular structures. But they do not fight against being used. The use of heteronomous force with living beings (i.e., the force that tends to bend us in directions contrary to our given structure and that is detrimental to our growth) arouses resistance. This resistance can take all forms, from overt, effective, direct, active resistance to indirect, ineffectual, and, very often, unconscious resistance.

What is restricted is the free, spontaneous expression of the infant's, the child's, the adolescent's, and eventually the adult's will, their thirst for knowledge and truth, their wish for affection. The growing person is forced to give up most of his or her autonomous, genuine desires and interests, and his or her own will, and to adopt a will and desires and feelings that are not autonomous but superimposed by the social patterns of thought and feeling. Society, and the family as its psychosocial agent, has to solve a difficult problem: *How to break a person's will without his being aware of it?* Yet by a complicated process of indoctrination, rewards, punishments, and fitting ideology, it solves this task by and large so well that most people believe they are following their own will and are unaware that their will itself is conditioned and manipulated.

The greatest difficulty in this suppression of the will exists with regard to sexuality, because we deal here with a strong tendency of the natural order that is less easy to manipulate than many other desires. For this reason society tries harder to fight sexual desires than almost any other human

desire. No need to cite the various forms of the vilification of sex from moral grounds (its evilness) to health grounds (masturbation does physical harm). The church still forbids birth control not really because of her concern with the sacredness of life (a concern which would lead to the condemnation of the death penalty or of war), but in order to denigrate sex, unless it serves procreation.

The effort made to suppress sex would be difficult to understand if it were for the sake of sex as such. Not sex, however, but the breaking of human will is the reason for vilifying sex. A great number of the so-called primitive societies have no sex taboo whatever. Since they function without exploitation and domination, they do not have to break the individual's will. They can afford not to stigmatize sex and to enjoy the pleasure of sexual relations without guilt feelings. Most remarkable in these societies is that this sexual freedom does not lead to sexual greed; that after a period of relatively transient sexual relations couples find each other; that they then have no desire to swap partners, but are also free to separate when love has gone. For these not-property-oriented groups sexual enjoyment is an expression of being, not the result of sexual possessiveness. In saying this I do not imply that we should return to living as these primitive societies do —not that we could, even if we wanted to, for the simple reason that the process of individuation and individual differentiation and distance that civilization has brought about gives individual love a different quality from that in primitive society. We cannot regress; we can only move forward. What matters is that new forms of propertylessness will do away with the sexual greed that is characteristic of all having societies.

Sexual desire is one expression of independence that is expressed very early in life (masturbation). Its denunciation serves to break the will of the child and make it feel guilty, and thus more submissive. To a large extent the impulse to break sexual taboos is essentially an attempt at rebellion aimed at restoring one's freedom. But the breaking of sexual taboos as such does not lead to greater freedom; the rebellion is drowned, as it were, in the sexual satisfaction … and in the person's subsequent guilt feelings. Only the achievement of inner independence is conducive to freedom and ends the need for fruitless rebellion. The same holds true for all other behavior that aims at doing the forbidden as an attempt to restore one's freedom. *Indeed, taboos create sexual obsessiveness and perversions, but sexual obsessiveness and perversions do not create freedom.*

The rebellion of the child manifests itself in many other ways: by the child's not accepting the rules of cleanliness training; by not eating, or by overeating; by aggression and sadism, and by many kinds of self-destructive acts. Often the rebellion manifests itself in a kind of general "slow-down strike"—a withdrawal of interest in the world, laziness, passivity, up to the most pathological forms of slow self-destruction. The effects of this power struggle between children and parents is the subject of David E. Schecter's paper on "Infant Development." All data indicate that *heteronomous interference with the child's and the later person's growth process is the deepest root of mental pathology, especially of destructiveness.*

It must be clearly understood, though, that freedom is not laissez-faire and arbitrariness. Human beings have a specific structure—like any other species—and can grow only in terms of this structure. Freedom does not mean freedom *from* all guiding principles. It means the freedom *to grow* according to the laws of the structure of human existence (autonomous restrictions). It means obedience to the laws that govern optimal human development. Any authority that furthers this goal is "rational authority" when this furtherance is achieved by way of helping to mobilize the child's activity, critical thinking, and faith in life. It is "irrational authority" when it imposes on the child heteronomous norms that serve the purposes of the authority, but not the purposes of the child's specific structure.

The having mode of existence, the attitude centered on property and profit, necessarily produces the desire—indeed the need—for power. To control other living human beings we need to use power to break their resistance. To maintain control over private property we need to use power to protect it from those who would take it from us because they, like us, can never have enough; the desire to have private property produces the desire to use violence in order to rob others in overt or covert ways. In the having mode, one's happiness lies in one's superiority over others, in one's power, and in the last analysis, in one's capacity to conquer, rob, kill. In the being mode it lies in loving, sharing, giving.

Other Factors Supporting the Having Mode

Language is an important factor in fortifying the having orientation. The name of a person—and we all have names (and maybe numbers if the

present-day trend toward depersonalization continues)—creates the illusion that he or she is an immortal being. The person and the name become equivalent; the name demonstrates that the person is a lasting, indestructible substance—and not a process. Some nouns have the same function: i.e., love, pride, hate, joy give the appearance of fixed substances, but such nouns have no reality and only obscure the insight that we are dealing with processes going on in a human being. But even nouns that are names of *things*, such as "table" or "lamp," are misleading. The words indicate that we are speaking of fixed substances, although things are nothing but a process of energy that causes certain sensations in our bodily system. But these sensations are not *perceptions* of specific things like table or lamp; these perceptions are the result of a cultural process of learning, a process that makes certain sensations assume the form of specific percepts. We naïvely believe that things like tables and lamps exist as such, and we fail to see that society teaches us to transform sensations into perceptions that permit us to manipulate the world around us in order to enable us to survive in a given culture. Once we have given such percepts a name, the name seems to guarantee the final and unchangeable reality of the percept.

The need to have has still another foundation, the *biologically given desire to live.* Whether we are happy or unhappy, our body impels us to strive for *immortality.* But since we know by experience that we shall die, we seek for solutions that make us believe that, in spite of the empirical evidence, we are immortal. This wish has taken many forms: the belief of the Pharaohs that their bodies enshrined in the pyramids would be immortal; many religious fantasies of life after death, in the happy hunting grounds of hunter societies; the Christian and Islam paradise. In contemporary society since the eighteenth century, "history" and "the future" have become the substitutes for the Christian heaven: fame, celebrity, even notoriety—anything that seems to guarantee a footnote in the record of history—constitutes a bit of immortality. The craving for fame is not just secular vanity—it has a religious quality for those who do not believe in the traditional hereafter any more. (This is particularly noticeable among political leaders.) Publicity paves the way to immortality, and the public relations agents become the new priests.

But perhaps more than anything else, possession of property constitutes the fulfillment of the craving for immortality, and it is for this reason that the having orientation has such strength. If my *self* is constituted

by what I *have*, then I am immortal if the things I have are indestructible. From Ancient Egypt to today—from physical immortality, via mummification of the body, to legal immortality, via the last will—people have remained alive beyond their physical/mental lifetimes. Via the legal power of the last will the disposal of our property is determined for generations to come; through the laws of inheritance, I—inasmuch as I am an owner of capital—become immortal.

The Having Mode and the Anal Character

A helpful approach to understanding the mode of having is to recall one of Freud's most significant findings, that after going through their infant phase of mere passive receptivity followed by a phase of aggressive exploitative receptivity, all children, before they reach maturity, go through a phase Freud designated the *anal-erotic.* Freud discovered that this phase often remains dominant during a person's development, and that when it does it leads to the development of the *anal character,* i.e., the character of a person whose main energy in life is directed toward having, saving, and hoarding money and material things as well as feelings, gestures, words, energy. It is the character of the stingy individual and is usually connected with such other traits as orderliness, punctuality, stubbornness, each to a more than ordinary degree. An important aspect of Freud's concept is the symbolic connection between money and feces—gold and dirt—of which he quotes a number of examples. His concept of the anal character as one that has not reached maturity is in fact a sharp criticism of bourgeois society of the nineteenth century, in which the qualities of the anal character constituted the norm for moral behavior and were looked upon as the expression of "human nature." Freud's equation: money = feces, is an implicit, although not intended, criticism of the functioning of bourgeois society and its possessiveness and may be compared with Marx's discussion of money in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.*

It is of little importance in this context that Freud believed that a special phase of the libido development was primary and that the character formation was secondary (while in my opinion it is the product of the interpersonal constellation in one's early life and, most of all, the social conditions conducive to its formation). What matters is Freud's view that *the predominant orientation in possession occurs in the period before the*

achievement of *full maturity and is pathological if it remains permanent.* For Freud, in other words, the person exclusively concerned with having and possession is a neurotic, mentally sick person; hence it would follow that the society in which most of the members are anal characters is a sick society.

Asceticism and Equality

Much of the moral and political discussion has centered on the question: To have or not to have? On the moral-religious level this meant the alternative between the ascetic life and the non-ascetic life, the latter including both productive enjoyment and unlimited pleasure. This alternative loses most of its meaning if one's emphasis is not on the single act of behavior but on the attitude underlying it. Ascetic behavior, with its constant preoccupation with non-enjoyment, may be only the negation of strong desires for having and consuming. In the ascetic these desires can be repressed, yet in the very attempt to suppress having and consuming, the person may be equally preoccupied with having and consuming. This denial by overcompensation is, as psychoanalytic data show, very frequent. It occurs in such cases as fanatical vegetarians repressing destructive impulses, fanatical antiabortionists repressing their murderous impulses, fanatics of "virtue" repressing their own "sinful" impulses. What matters here is not a certain conviction as such, but the fanaticism that supports it. This, like all fanaticism, suggests the suspicion that it serves to cover other, and usually the opposite, impulses.

In the economic and political field a similar erroneous alternative is between unrestricted inequality and absolute equality of income. If everybody's possessions are functional and personal, then whether someone has somewhat more than another person does not constitute a social problem, for since possession is not essential, envy does not grow. On the other hand, those who are concerned with equality in the sense that each one's share must be exactly equal to anyone else's show that their own having orientation is as strong as ever, except that it is denied by their preoccupation with exact equality. Behind this concern their real motivation is visible: envy. Those demanding that nobody should have more than themselves are thus protecting themselves from the envy they would feel if anyone had even an ounce more of anything. What matters is that both

luxury and poverty shall be eradicated; equality must not mean the quantitative equality of each morsel of material goods, but that income is not differentiated to a point that creates different experiences of life for different groups. In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* Marx pointed this out in what he calls “crude communism,” which “negates the personality of man in every sphere”; this type of communism “is only the culmination of such envy and leveling-down on the basis of a preconceived minimum.”

Existential Having

In order to fully appreciate the mode of having that we are dealing with here, yet another qualification seems necessary, that of the function of *existential having;* human existence requires that we have, keep, take care of, and use certain things in order to survive. This holds true for our bodies, for food, shelter, clothing, and for the tools necessary to produce our needs. This form of having may be called existential having because it is rooted in human existence. It is a rationally directed impulse in the pursuit of staying alive—in contrast to the *characterological having* we have been dealing with so far, which is a passionate drive to retain and keep that is not innate, but that has developed as the result of the impact of social conditions on the human species as it is biologically given.

Existential having is not in conflict with being; characterological having necessarily is. Even the “just” and the “saintly,” inasmuch as they are human, must want to have in the existential sense—while the average person wants to have in the existential *and* in the characterological sense. (See the earlier discussion of existential and characterological dichotomies in *Man for Himself.)*

V.
What Is the Being Mode?

MOST OF US KNOW more about the mode of having than we do about the mode of being, because having is by far the more frequently experienced mode in our culture. But something more important than that makes defining the mode of being so much more difficult than defining the mode of having, namely the very nature of the difference between these two modes of existence.

Having refers to *things* and things are fixed and *describable.* Being refers to *experience,* and human experience is in principle not describable. What is fully describable is our *persona*—the mask we each wear, the ego we present—for this persona is in itself a thing. In contrast, the living human being is not a dead image and cannot be described like a thing. In fact, the living human being cannot be described at all. Indeed, much can be said about me, about my character, about my total orientation to life. This insightful knowledge can go very far in understanding and describing my own or another's psychical structure. But the total me, my whole individuality, my suchness that is as unique as my fingerprints are, can never be fully understood, not even by empathy, for no two human beings are identical.[12] Only in the process of mutual alive relatedness can the other and I overcome the barrier of separateness, inasmuch as we both participate in the dance of life. Yet our full identification with each other can never be achieved.

Even a single act of behavior cannot be fully described. One could write pages of description of the Mona Lisa's smile, and still the pictured smile would not have been caught in words—but not because her smile is so "mysterious." Everybody's smile is mysterious (unless it is the learned, synthetic smile of the marketplace). No one can fully describe the expression of interest, enthusiasm, biophilia, or of hate or narcissism that one may see in the eyes of another person, or the variety of facial expressions, of gaits, of postures, of intonations that characterize people.

Being Active

The mode of being has as its prerequisites independence, freedom, and the presence of critical reason. Its fundamental characteristic is that of being active, not in the sense of outward activity, of busyness, but of inner activity, the productive use of our human powers. To be active means to give expression to one's faculties, talents, to the wealth of human gifts with which—though in varying degrees—every human being is endowed. It means to renew oneself, to grow, to flow out, to love, to transcend the prison of one's isolated ego, to be interested, to "list," to give. Yet none of these experiences can be fully expressed in words. The words are vessels that are filled with experience that overflows the vessels. The words point to an experience; they are not the experience. The moment that I express what I experience exclusively in thought and words, the experience has gone: it has dried up, is dead, a mere thought. Hence being is indescribable in words and is communicable only by sharing my experience. In the structure of having, the dead word rules; in the structure of being, the alive and inexpressible experience rules. (Of course, in the being mode there is also thinking that is alive and productive.)

Perhaps the being mode may best be described in a symbol suggested to me by Max Hunziger: A blue glass appears to be blue when light shines through it because it absorbs all other colors and thus does not let them pass. This is to say, we call a glass "blue" precisely because it does not retain the blue waves. It is named not for what it possesses but for what it gives out.

Only to the extent that we decrease the mode of having, that is of nonbeing—i.e., stop finding security and identity by clinging to what we have, by "sitting on it," by holding onto our ego and our possessions—can the mode of being emerge. "To be" requires giving up one's egocentricity and selfishness, or in words often used by the mystics, by making oneself "empty" and "poor."

But most people find giving up their having orientation too difficult; any attempt to do so arouses their intense anxiety and feels like giving up all security, like being thrown into the ocean when one does not know how to swim. They do not know that when they have given up the crutch of property, they can begin to use their own proper forces and walk by themselves. What holds them back is the illusion that they could not walk

by themselves, that they would collapse if they were not supported by the things they have.

Activity and Passivity

Being, in the sense we have described it, implies the faculty of being active; passivity excludes being. However, “active” and “passive” are among the most misunderstood words, because their meaning is completely different today from what it was from classic antiquity and the Middle Ages to the period beginning with the Renaissance. In order to understand the concept of being, the concept of activity and passivity must be clarified.

In modern usage activity is usually defined as a quality of behavior that brings about a visible effect by expenditure of energy. Thus, for instance, farmers who cultivate their lands are called active; so are workers on assembly lines, salespeople who persuade their customers to buy, investors who invest their own or other people’s money, physicians who treat their patients, clerks who sell postage stamps, bureaucrats who file papers. While some of these activities may require more interest and concentration than others, this does not matter with regard to “activity.” Activity, by and large, is *socially recognized purposeful behavior that results in corresponding socially useful changes.*

Activity in the modern sense refers only to *behavior,* not to the person behind the behavior. It makes no difference whether people are active because they are driven by external force, like a slave, or by internal compulsion, like a person driven by anxiety. It does not matter whether they are interested in their work, like a carpenter or a creative writer, or a scientist or a gardener; or whether they have no inner relation to and satisfaction in what they are doing, like the worker on the assembly line or the postal clerk.

The modern sense of activity makes no distinction between *activity* and mere *busyness.* But there is a fundamental difference between the two that corresponds to the terms “alienated” and “non-alienated” in respect to activities. In alienated activity I do not experience myself as the acting subject of my activity; rather, I experience the *outcome* of my activity—and that as something “over there,” separated from me and standing above and against me. In alienated activity I do not really act; I am *acted upon* by external or internal forces. I have become separated from the result of my

activity. The best observable case of alienated activity in the field of psychopathology is that of compulsive-obsessional persons. Forced by an inner urge to do something against their own wills—such as counting steps, repeating certain phrases, performing certain private rituals—they can be extremely active in the pursuit of this aim; but as psychoanalytic investigation has amply shown, they are driven by an inner force that they are unaware of. An equally clear example of alienated activity is posthypnotic behavior. Persons under hypnotic suggestion to do this or that upon awakening from the hypnotic trance will do these things without any awareness that they are not doing what they *want* to do, but are following their respective hypnotists' previously given orders.

In nonalienated activity, I experience *myself* as the *subject* of my activity. Non-alienated activity is a process of giving birth to something, of producing something and remaining related to what I produce. This also implies that my activity is a manifestation of my powers, that I and my activity are one. I call this non-alienated activity *productive activity.**[13]***

"Productive" as used here does not refer to the capacity to create something new or original, as an artist or scientist may be creative. Neither does it refer to the product of my activity, but to its *quality.* A painting or a scientific treatise may be quite unproductive, i.e., sterile; on the other hand, the process going on in persons who are aware of themselves in depth, or who truly "see" a tree rather than just look at it, or who read a poem and experience in themselves the movement of feelings the poet has expressed in words—that process may be very productive, although nothing is "produced." Productive activity denotes the state of inner activity; it does not necessarily have a connection with the creation of a work of art, of science, or of something "useful." Productiveness is a character orientation all human beings are capable of, to the extent that they are not emotionally crippled. Productive persons animate whatever they touch. They give birth to their own faculties and bring life to other persons and to things.

"Activity" and "passivity" can each have two entirely different meanings. Alienated activity, in the sense of mere busyness, is actually "passivity," in the sense of productivity; while passivity, in terms of non-busyness, may be non-alienated activity. This is so difficult to understand today because most activity is alienated "passivity," while productive passivity is rarely experienced.

Activity—Passivity, According to the Masters of Thought

"Activity" and "passivity" were not used in the current sense in the philosophical tradition of pre-industrial society. They hardly could have been, since the alienation of work had not reached a point comparable to the one existing now. For this reason such philosophers as *Aristotle* do not even make a clear-cut distinction between "activity" and mere "busyness." In Athens, alienated work was done only by slaves; work which involved bodily labor seems to have been excluded from the concept of *praxis* ("practice"), a term that refers only to almost any kind of activity a *free* person is likely to perform, and essentially the term Aristotle used for a person's free activity. (See Nicholas Lobkowicz, *Theory and Practice.)* Considering this background, the problem of subjectively meaningless, alienated, purely routinized work could hardly arise for free Athenians. Their freedom implied precisely that because they were not slaves, their activity was productive and meaningful to them.

That Aristotle did not share our present concepts of activity and passivity becomes unmistakably clear if we will consider that for him the highest form of praxis, i.e., of activity—even above political activity—is the *contemplative life,* devoted to the search for truth. The idea that contemplation was a form of inactivity was unthinkable for him. Aristotle considers contemplative life the *activity* of the best part in us, the *nous.* The slave can enjoy sensuous pleasure, even as the free do. But *eudaimonia,* "well-being," consists not in pleasures but in *activities in accordance with virtue (Nichomachean Ethics*, 1177a, 2 ff.*).*

Like Aristotle's, *Thomas Aquinas'* position is also in contrast to the modern concept of activity. For Aquinas, too, the life devoted to inner stillness and spiritual knowledge, the *vita contemplativa, is* the highest form of human activity. He concedes that the daily life, the *vita activa,* of the average person, is also valuable, and it leads to well-being *(beatitudo),* provided—and this qualification is crucial—that the aim toward which all one's activities are directed is well-being and that one is able to control one's passions and one's body (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, 2-2: 182, 183; 1-2:4,6).

While Aquinas' attitude is one of a certain compromise, the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing,* a contemporary of *Master Eckhart,* argues sharply against the value of the active life, while Eckhart, on the other hand,

speaks out very much in favor of it. The contradiction is not as sharp as it may appear, however, because all agree that activity is “wholesome” only when it is rooted in and expresses the ultimate ethical and spiritual demands. For this reason, for all these teachers, busyness, i.e., activity separated from people’s spiritual ground, is to be rejected.[14]

As a person and as a thinker *Spinoza* embodied the spirit and the values that were alive in Eckhart’s time, roughly four centuries earlier; yet he also keenly observed the changes that had occurred in society and in the average person. He was the founder of modern scientific psychology; one of the discoverers of the dimension of the unconscious, and with this enriched insight he gave a more systematic and precise analysis of the difference between activity and passivity than had any of his predecessors.

In his *Ethics*, Spinoza distinguishes between activity and passivity (to act and to suffer) as the two fundamental aspects of the mind’s operation. The first criterion for *acting is* that an action follows from human nature: “I say that we act when anything is done, either within us or without us, of which we are the adequate cause, that is to say, when from our nature anything follows, either within or without us, which by that nature alone can be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand I say that we suffer [i.e., in Spinoza’s sense, are passive] when anything is done within us, or when anything follows from our nature of which we are not the cause except partially” *(Ethics*, 3, def. 2).

These sentences are difficult for the modern reader, who is accustomed to think that the term “human nature” does not correspond to any demonstrable empirical data. But for Spinoza, as for Aristotle, this is not so; nor is it for some contemporary neurophysiologists, biologists, and psychologists. Spinoza believes that human nature is as characteristic for human beings as horse nature is for the horse; furthermore, that goodness or badness, success or failure, well-being or suffering, activity or passivity depend on the degree to which persons succeed in the optimal realization of their species’ nature; the closer we arrive at the model of human nature, the greater are our freedom and our well-being.

In Spinoza’s model of human beings the attribute of activity is inseparable from another: reason. Inasmuch as we act in accordance with the conditions of our existence, and are aware of these conditions as real and necessary ones, we know the truth about ourselves. “Our mind acts at times and at times suffers: in so far as it has adequate ideas, it necessarily

acts: and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it necessarily suffers" *(Ethics,* 3, prop. 1).

Desires are divided into active and passive ones *(actiones* and *passiones).* The former are rooted in the conditions of our existence (the natural and not the pathological distortions), and the latter are not thus rooted but are caused by inner or outer distorting conditions. The former exist to the extent that we are free; the latter are caused by inner or outer force. All "active affects" are necessarily good: "passions" can be good or evil. According to Spinoza, activity, reason, freedom, well-being, joy, and self-perfection are inseparably connected—in the same way as passivity, irrationality, bondage, sadness, powerlessness, and strivings contrary to the demands Cf. human nature are *(Ethics,* 4, app. 2, 3, 5; props. 40, 42).

One understands Spinoza's ideas about passions and passivity fully only if one proceeds to the last—and most modern—step of his thinking: that to be driven by irrational passions is to be mentally sick. To the degree that we achieve optimal growth, we are not only (relatively) free, strong, rational, and joyous but also mentally healthy; to the degree that we fail to reach this aim, we are unfree, weak, lacking rationality, and depressed. Spinoza, to my knowledge, was the first modern thinker to postulate that mental health and sickness are outcomes of right and wrong living respectively.

For Spinoza mental health is, in the last analysis, a manifestation of right living; mental illness, a symptom of the failure to live according to the requirements of human nature. "But if the *greedy* person thinks only of money and possessions, the ambitious one only of fame, one does not think of them as being insane, but only as annoying; generally one has contempt for them. But *factually,* greediness, ambition, and so forth are forms of insanity, although usually one does not think of them as 'illness'" (*Ethics,* 4, prop. 44). In this statement, so foreign to the thinking of our time, Spinoza considers passions that do not correspond to the needs of human nature as pathological; in fact, he goes so far as to call them a form of insanity.

Spinoza's concepts of activity and passivity are a most radical critique of industrial society. In contrast to today's belief that persons driven mainly by greed for money, possession, or fame are normal and well adjusted, they are considered by Spinoza utterly passive and basically sick. The active persons in Spinoza's sense, which he personified in his own life, have

become exceptions, and are somewhat suspected of being “neurotic” because they are so little adapted to so-called normal activity.

Marx wrote (in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts)* that “free conscious activity” (i.e., human activity) is “the species character of man.” Labor, for him, represents human activity, and human activity is life. Capital, on the other hand, represents for Marx the amassed, the past, and in the last analysis, the dead *(Grundrisse).* One cannot fully understand the affective charge which the struggle between capital and labor had for Marx unless one considers that for him it was the fight between aliveness and deadness, the present versus the past, people versus things, being versus having. For Marx the question was: Who should rule whom—should life rule the dead, or the dead rule life? Socialism, for him, represented a society in which life had won over the dead.

Marx’s whole critique of capitalism and his vision of socialism are rooted in the concept that human self-activity is paralyzed in the capitalist system and that the goal is to restore full humanity by restoring activity in all spheres of life.

Despite the formulations influenced by the classic economists, the cliché that Marx was a determinist, making human beings the passive objects of history and depriving them of their activity, is the very opposite of his thinking, as any who themselves read Marx, rather than a few isolated sentences taken out of context, will be easily convinced. Marx’s views could not be more clearly expressed than they are in his own statement: “History does nothing; it possesses no colossal riches, it ‘fights no fight.’ It is rather man—real, living man—who acts, possesses and fights everything. It is by no means ‘History’ which uses man as a means to carry out its ends as if it were a person apart; rather History is nothing but the activity of man in pursuit of his ends” (Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family).* Of near contemporaries none has perceived the passive character of modern activity as penetratingly as has *Albert Schweitzer,* who, in his study of the decay and restoration of civilization, saw modern Man as unfree, incomplete, unconcentrated, pathologically dependent, and “absolutely passive.

Being as Reality

Thus far I have described the meaning of being by contrasting it to having. But a second, equally important meaning of being is revealed by

contrasting it to *appearing.* If I appear to be kind while my kindness is only a mask to cover my exploitativeness—if I appear to be courageous while I am extremely vain or perhaps suicidal—if I appear to love my country while I am furthering my selfish interests, the appearance, i.e., my overt behavior, is in drastic contradiction to the reality of forces that motivate me. My behavior is different from my character. My character structure, the true motivation of my behavior, constitutes my real being. My behavior may partly reflect my being, but it is usually a mask that I have and that I wear for my own purposes. Behaviorism deals with this mask as if it were a reliable scientific datum; true insight is focused on the inner reality, which is usually neither conscious nor directly observable. This concept of being as "unmasking," as is expressed by Eckhart, is central in Spinoza's and Marx's thought and is the fundamental discovery of Freud.

To understand the discrepancy between behavior and character, between my mask and the reality it hides, is the main achievement of Freud's psychoanalysis. He devised a method (free association, analysis of dreams, transference, and resistance) that aimed at uncovering the instinctual (essentially sexual) desires that had been repressed in early childhood. Even when later developments in psychoanalytic theory and therapy proceeded to emphasize traumatic events in the field of early interpersonal relations rather than of instinctual life, the principle remained the same: What is repressed are early and—as I believe—later traumatic desires and fears; the way to recovery from symptoms or from a more general malaise lies in uncovering this repressed material. In other words, what is repressed are the irrational, infantile, and individual elements of experience.

On the other hand, the common-sense views of a normal, i.e., socially adapted, citizen were supposed to be rational and not in need of depth analysis. But this is not true at all. Our conscious motivations, ideas, and beliefs are a blend of false information, biases, irrational passions, rationalizations, prejudices, in which morsels of truth swim around and give the reassurance, albeit false, that the whole mixture is real and true. The thinking process attempts to organize this whole cesspool of illusions according to the laws of logic and plausibility. This level of consciousness is supposed to reflect reality; it is the map we use for organizing our life. This false map is not repressed. *What is repressed is the knowledge of reality, the knowledge of what is true.* If we ask, then: *What is unconscious?*

the answer must be: Aside from irrational passions, almost the whole of knowledge of reality. The unconscious is basically determined by society, which produces irrational passions and provides its members with various kinds of fiction and thus forces the truth to become the prisoner of the alleged rationality.

Stating that the truth is repressed is based, of course, on the premise that we know the truth and repress this knowledge; in other words, that there is "unconscious knowledge." My experience in psychoanalysis—of others and of myself—is that this is indeed true. We perceive reality, and we cannot help perceiving it. Just as our senses are organized to see, hear, smell, touch when we are brought together with reality, our reason is organized to recognize reality, i.e., to see things as they are, to perceive the truth. I am not of course referring to the part of reality that requires scientific tools or methods in order to be perceived. I am referring to what is recognizable by concentrated "seeing," especially the reality in ourselves and in others. We know when we meet a dangerous person, when we meet somebody we can fully trust; we know when we are lied to, or exploited, or fooled, when we have sold ourselves a bill of goods. We know almost everything that is important to know about human behavior, just as our ancestors had a remarkable knowledge about the movements of the stars. But while they were *aware* of their knowledge and used it, we repress our knowledge immediately, because if it were conscious it would make life too difficult and, as we persuade ourselves, too "dangerous."

The proof of this statement is easy to find. It exists in many dreams in which we exhibit a deep insight into the essence of other people, and of ourselves, which we completely lack in the daytime. (I included examples of "insight dreams" in *The Forgotten Language.)* It is evidenced in those frequent reactions in which we suddenly see somebody in an entirely different light, and then feel as if we had had this knowledge all the time before. It can be found in the phenomenon of resistance when the painful truth threatens to come to the surface: in slips of the tongue, in awkward expressions, in a state of trance, or in instances when a person says something, as if in an aside, that is the very opposite of what he or she always claimed to believe, and then seems to have forgotten this aside a minute later. Indeed, a great deal of our energy is used to hide from ourselves what we know, and the degree of such repressed knowledge can hardly be overestimated. A Talmudic legend has expressed this concept of

the repression of the truth, in a poetic form: when a child is born, an angel touches its forehead, so that it forgets the knowledge of the truth that it has at the moment of birth. If the child did not forget, later life would become unbearable.

Returning to our main thesis: Being refers to the real, in contrast to the falsified, illusionary picture. In this sense, any attempt to increase the sector of being means increased insight into the reality of one's self, of others, of the world around us. The main ethical goals of Judaism and Christianity—overcoming greed and hate—cannot be realized without another factor that is central in Buddhism even though it plays also a role in Judaism and in Christianity: The way to being is penetrating the surface and grasping reality.

The Will to Give, to Share, to Sacrifice

In contemporary society the having mode of existing is assumed to be rooted in human nature and, hence, virtually unchangeable. The same idea is expressed in the dogma that people are basically lazy, passive by nature, and that they do not want to work or to do anything else, unless they are driven by the incentive of material gain … or hunger … or the fear of punishment. This dogma is doubted by hardly anybody, and it determines our methods of education and of work. But it is little more than an expression of the wish to prove the value of our social arrangements by imputing to them that they follow the needs of human nature. To the members of many different societies of both past and present, the concept of innate human selfishness and laziness would appear as fantastic as the reverse sounds to us.

The truth is that both the having and the being modes of existence are potentialities of human nature, that our biological urge for survival tends to further the having mode, but that selfishness and laziness are not the only propensities inherent in human beings.

We human beings have an inherent and deeply rooted desire to be: to express our faculties, to be active, to be related to others, to escape the prison cell of selfishness. The truth of this statement is proven by so much evidence that a whole volume could easily be filled with it. D. O. Hebb has formulated the gist of the problem in the most general form by stating that

the only behavioral problem is to account for inactivity, not for activity. The following data are evidence for this general thesis:[15]

The data on animal behavior, experiments, and direct observation show that many species undertake difficult tasks with pleasure, even when no material rewards are offered.

1. Neurophysiological experiments demonstrate the activity inherent in the nerve cells.
2. Infantile behavior. Recent studies show the capacity and need of small infants to respond actively to complicated stimuli—findings in contrast to Freud's assumption that the infant experiences the outside stimulus as a threat and that it mobilizes its aggressiveness in order to remove the threat.
3. Learning behavior. Many studies show that the child and adolescent are lazy because learning material is presented to them in a dry and dead way that is incapable of arousing their genuine interest; if the pressure and the boredom are removed and the material is presented in an alive way, remarkable activity and initiative are mobilized.

Work behavior. E. Mayo's classic experiment has shown that even work which in itself is boring becomes interesting if the workers know that they are participating in an experiment conducted by an alive and gifted person who has the capacity to arouse their curiosity and their participation. The same has been shown in a number of factories in Europe and in the United States. The managers' stereotype of the workers is: workers are not really interested in active participation; all they want are higher wages, hence profit sharing might be an incentive for higher work productivity, but not the workers' participation. While the managers are right as far as the work methods they offer are concerned, experience has shown—and has convinced not a few managers—that if the workers can be truly active, responsible, and knowledgeable in their work role, the formerly uninterested ones change considerably and show a remarkable degree of inventiveness, activity, imagination, and satisfaction.[16]

1. The wealth of data to be found in social and political life. The belief that people do not want to make sacrifices is notoriously wrong. When Churchill announced at the beginning of the Second World War that

> what he had to demand from the British was blood, sweat, and tears, he did not deter them, but on the contrary, he appealed to their deep-seated human desire to make sacrifices, to give of themselves. The reaction of the British—and of the Germans and the Russians as well—toward the indiscriminate bombing of population centers by the belligerents proves that common suffering did not weaken their spirit; it strengthened their resistance and proved wrong those who believed terror bombing could break the morale of the enemy and help finish the war.

It is a sad commentary on our civilization, however, that war and suffering rather than peacetime living can mobilize human readiness to make sacrifices, and that the times of peace seem mainly to encourage selfishness. Fortunately, there are situations in peacetime in which human strivings for giving and solidarity manifest themselves in individual behavior. The workers' strikes, especially up to the period of the First World War, are an example of such essentially nonviolent behavior. The workers sought higher wages, but at the same time, they risked and accepted severe hardships in order to fight for their own dignity and the satisfaction of experiencing human solidarity. The strike was as much a "religious" as an economic phenomenon. While such strikes still do occur even today, most present-day strikes are for economic reasons although strikes for better working conditions have increased recently.

The need to give and to share and the willingness to make sacrifices for others are still to be found among the members of certain professions, such as nurses, physicians, monks, and nuns. The goal of helping and sacrificing is given only lip service by many, if not most, of these professionals; yet the character of a goodly number corresponds to the values they profess. We find the same needs affirmed and expressed in many communes throughout the centuries, whether religious, socialist, or humanist. We find the wish to give in the people who volunteer their blood (without payment), in the many situations in which people risk their lives to save another's. We find the manifestation of the will to give in people who genuinely love. "False love," i.e., shared mutual selfishness, makes people more selfish (and this is the case often enough). Genuine love increases the capacity to love and to give to others. The true lover loves the whole world, in his or her love for a specific person.[17]

Conversely, we find that not a few people, especially younger ones, cannot stand the luxury and selfishness that surround them in their affluent families. Quite against the expectations of their elders, who think that their children "have everything they wish," they rebel against the deadness and isolation of their lives. For the fact is, they do not have everything they wish and they wish for what they do not have.

Outstanding examples of such people from past history are the sons and daughters of the rich in the Roman Empire, who embraced the religion of poverty and love; another is the Buddha, who was a prince and had every pleasure and luxury that he could possibly want, but discovered that having and consuming cause unhappiness and suffering. A more recent example (second half of the nineteenth century) is the sons and daughters of the Russian upper class, the *Narodniki.* Finding themselves no longer able to stand the life of idleness and injustice they had been born into, these young people left their families and joined the poor peasants, lived with them, and helped to lay one of the foundations of the revolutionary struggle in Russia.

We can witness a similar phenomenon among the sons and daughters of the well-to-do in the United States and Germany, who see their life in their affluent home environment as boring and meaningless. But more than that, they find the world's callousness toward the poor and the drift toward nuclear war for the sake of individual egotism unbearable. Thus, they move away from their home environment, looking for a new lifestyle—and remain unsatisfied because no constructive effort seems to have a chance. Many among them were originally the most idealistic and sensitive of the young generation; but at this point, lacking in tradition, maturity, experience, and political wisdom, they become desperate, narcissistically overestimate their own capacities and possibilities, and try to achieve the impossible by the use of force. They form so-called revolutionary groups and expect to save the world by acts of terror and destruction, not seeing that they are only contributing to the general tendency to violence and inhumanity. They have lost their capacity to love and have replaced it with the wish to sacrifice their lives. (Self-sacrifice is frequently the solution for individuals who ardently desire to love, but who have lost the capacity to love and see in the sacrifice of their own lives an experience of love in the highest degree.) But these self-sacrificing young people are very different from the *loving martyrs,* who want to live because they love life and who accept death only when they are forced to die in order not to betray

themselves. Our present-day self-sacrificing young people are the accused, but they are also the accusers, in demonstrating that in our social system some of the very best young people become so isolated and hopeless that nothing but destruction and fanaticism are left as a way out of their despair.

The human desire to experience union with others is rooted in the specific conditions of existence that characterize the human species and is one of the strongest motivators of human behavior. By the combination of minimal instinctive determination and maximal development of the capacity for reason, we human beings have lost our original oneness with nature. In order not to feel utterly isolated—which would, in fact, condemn us to insanity—we need to find a new unity: with our fellow beings and with nature. This human need for unity with others is experienced in many ways: in the symbiotic tie to mother, an idol, one's tribe, one's nation, one's class, one's religion, one's fraternity, one's professional organization. Often, of course, these ties overlap, and often they assume an ecstatic form, as among members of certain religious sects or of a lynch mob, or in the outbursts of national hysteria in the case of war. The outbreak of the First World War, for example, occasioned one of the most drastic of these ecstatic forms of "union." Suddenly, from one day to the next, people gave up their lifelong convictions of pacifism, antimilitarism, socialism; scientists threw away their lifelong training in objectivity, critical thinking, and impartiality in order to join the big *We*.

The desire to experience union with others manifests itself in the lowest kind of behavior, i.e., in acts of sadism and destruction, as well as in the highest: solidarity on the basis of an ideal or conviction. It is also the main cause of the need to adapt; human beings are more afraid of being outcasts than even of dying. Crucial to every society is the kind of union and solidarity it fosters and the kind it can further, under the given conditions of its socioeconomic structure.

These considerations seem to indicate that both tendencies are present in human beings: the one, to *have—to* possess—that owes its strength in the last analysis to the biological factor of the desire for survival; the other, to *be*—to share, to give, to sacrifice—that owes its strength to the specific conditions of human existence and the inherent need to overcome one's isolation by oneness with others. From these two contradictory strivings in every human being it follows that the social structure, its values and norms, decides which of the two becomes dominant. Cultures that foster the greed

for possession, and thus the having mode of existence, are rooted in one human potential; cultures that foster being and sharing are rooted in the other potential. We must decide which of these two potentials we want to cultivate, realizing, however, that our decision is largely determined by the socioeconomic structure of a given society that inclines us toward one or the other solution.

From my observations in the field of group behavior my best guess is that the two extreme groups, respectively manifesting deeply ingrained and almost unalterable types of having and of being, form a small minority; that in the vast majority both possibilities are real, and which of the two becomes dominant and which is repressed depends on environmental factors.

This assumption contradicts a widely held psychoanalytic dogma that environment produces essential changes in personality development in infancy and early childhood, but that after this period the character is fixed and hardly changed by external events. This psychoanalytic dogma has been able to gain acceptance because the basic conditions of their childhood continue into most people's later life, since in general, the same social conditions continue to exist. But numerous instances exist in which a drastic change in environment leads to a fundamental change in behavior, i.e., when the negative forces cease to be fed and the positive forces are nurtured and encouraged.

To sum up, the frequency and intensity of the desire to share, to give, and to sacrifice are not surprising if we consider the conditions of existence of the human species. What is surprising is that this need could be so repressed as to make acts of selfishness the rule in industrial (and many other) societies and acts of solidarity the exception. But, paradoxically, this very phenomenon is caused by the need for union. A society whose principles are acquisition, profit, and property produces a social character oriented around having, and once the dominant pattern is established, nobody wants to be an outsider, or indeed an outcast; in order to avoid this risk everybody adapts to the majority, who have in common only their mutual antagonism.

As a consequence of the dominant attitude of selfishness, the leaders of our society believe that people can be motivated only by the expectation of material advantages, i.e., by rewards, and that they will not react to appeals for solidarity and sacrifice. Hence, except in times of war, these

appeals are rarely made, and the chances to observe the possible results of such appeals are lost.

Only a radically different socioeconomic structure and a radically different picture of human nature could show that bribery is not the only way (or the best way) to influence people.

VI.
Further Aspects of Having and Being

Security—Insecurity

NOT TO MOVE FORWARD, to stay where we are, to regress, in other words to rely on what we have, is very tempting, for what we *have,* we know; we can hold onto it, feel secure in it. We fear, and consequently avoid, taking a step into the unknown, the uncertain; for, indeed, while the *step* may not appear risky to us *after* we have taken it, *before* we take that step the new aspects beyond it appear very risky, and hence frightening. Only the old, the tried, is safe; or so it seems. Every new step contains the danger of failure, and that is one of the reasons people are so afraid of freedom.[18]

Naturally, at every state of life the "old and accustomed" is different. As infants we *have* only our body and our mother's breasts (originally still undifferentiated). Then we start to orient ourselves to the world, beginning the process of making a place for ourselves in it. We begin wanting to *have* things: we *have* our mother, father, siblings, toys; later on we *acquire* knowledge, a job, a social position, a spouse, children, and then we *have* a kind of afterlife already, when we acquire a burial plot and life insurance and make our "last will."

Yet in spite of the security of having, people admire those with a vision of the new, those who break a new path, who have the courage to move forward. In mythology this mode of existence is represented symbolically by the *hero.* Heroes are those with the courage to leave what they have—their land, their family, their property—and move out, not without fear, but without succumbing to their fear. In the Buddhist tradition the Buddha is the hero who leaves all possessions, all certainty contained in Hindu theology—his rank, his family—and moves on to a life of nonattachment. Abraham and Moses are heroes in the Jewish tradition. The Christian hero is Jesus, who had nothing and—in the eyes of the world—is nothing, yet who acts

out of the fullness of his love for all human beings. The Greeks have secular heroes, whose aim is victory, satisfaction of their pride, conquest. Yet, like the spiritual heroes, Hercules and Odysseus move forward, undeterred by the risks and dangers that await them. The fairy tale heroes meet the same criteria: leaving, moving forward, and tolerating uncertainty.

We admire these heroes because we deeply feel their way is the way we would want to be—if we could. But being afraid, we believe that we cannot be that way, that only the heroes can. The heroes become idols; we transfer to them our own capacity to move, and then stay where we are —"because we are not heroes."

This discussion might seem to imply that while being a hero is desirable, it is foolish and against one's self-interest. Not so, by any means. The cautious, the having persons enjoy security, yet by necessity they are very insecure. They depend on what they have: money, prestige, their ego—that is to say, on something outside themselves. But what becomes of them if they lose what they have? For, indeed, whatever one has can be lost. Most obviously, one's property can be lost—and with it usually one's position, one's friends—and at any moment one can, and sooner or later one is bound to, lose one's life.

If I am what I have and if what I have is lost, who then am I? Nobody but a defeated, deflated, pathetic testimony to a wrong way of living. Because I *can* lose what I have, I am necessarily constantly worried that I *shall* lose what I have. I am afraid of thieves, of economic changes, of revolutions, of sickness, of death, and I am afraid of love, of freedom, of growth, of change, of the unknown. Thus I am continuously worried, suffering from a chronic hypochondriasis, with regard not only to loss of health but to any other loss of what I have; I become defensive, hard, suspicious, lonely, driven by the need to have more in order to be better protected. Ibsen has given a beautiful description of this self-centered person in his *Peer Gynt.* The hero is filled only with himself; in his extreme egoism he believes that he is *himself,* because *he* is a "bundle of desires." At the end of his life he recognizes that because of his property-structured existence, he has failed to be himself, that he is like an onion without a kernel, an unfinished man, who never was himself.

The anxiety and insecurity engendered by the danger of losing what one has are absent in the being mode. If *I am who I am* and not what I have, nobody can deprive me of or threaten my security and my sense of identity.

My center is within myself; my capacity for being and for expressing my essential powers is part of my character structure and depends on me. This holds true for the normal process of living, not, of course, for such circumstances as incapacitating illness, torture, or other cases of powerful external restrictions.

While having is based on some thing that is diminished by use, being grows by practice. (The "burning bush" that is not consumed is the biblical symbol for this paradox.) The powers of reason, of love, of artistic and intellectual creation, all essential powers grow through the process of being expressed. What is spent is not lost, but on the contrary, what is kept is lost. The only threat to my security in being lies in myself: in lack of faith in life and in my productive powers; in regressive tendencies; in inner laziness and in the willingness to have others take over my life. But these dangers are not *inherent* in being, as the danger of losing is inherent in having.

Solidarity—Antagonism

The experience of loving, liking, enjoying something without wanting to *have* it is the one Suzuki referred to in contrasting the Japanese and the English poems (see Chapter I). It is indeed not easy for modern Western Man to experience enjoyment separate from having. However, neither is it entirely foreign to us. Suzuki's example of the flower would not apply if instead of looking at the flower the wanderer looked at a mountain, a meadow, or anything that cannot be physically taken away. To be sure, many, or most, people would not really *see* the mountain, except as a cliché; instead of *seeing* it they would want to know its name and its height—or they might want to climb it, which can be another form of taking possession of it. But some can genuinely see the mountain and enjoy it. The same may be said in respect to appreciating works of music: that is, buying a recording of music one loves can be an act of possessing the work, and perhaps the majority of people who enjoy art really do "consume" it; but a minority probably still responds to music and art with genuine joy and without any impulse to "have."

Sometimes one can read people's responses in their facial expressions. I recently saw a television film of the extraordinary acrobats and jugglers of the Chinese circus during which the camera repeatedly surveyed the audience, to register the response of individuals in the crowd. Most of the

faces were lit up, brought to life, became beautified in response to the graceful, alive performance. Only a minority seemed cold and unmoved.

Another example of enjoying without wanting to possess may be readily seen in our response to small children. Here, too, I suspect a great deal of self-deceptive behavior takes place, for we like to see ourselves in the role of lovers of children. But even though there may be reason for suspicion, I believe that genuine, alive response to infants is not at all rare. This may be partly so because, in contrast to their feelings about adolescents and adults, most people are not afraid of children and so feel free to respond to them lovingly, which we cannot do if fear stands in our way.

The most relevant example for enjoyment without the craving to have what one enjoys may be found in interpersonal relations. A man and a woman may enjoy each other on many grounds; each may like the other's attitudes, tastes, ideas, temperament, or whole personality. Yet only in those who must *have* what they like will this mutual enjoyment habitually result in the desire for sexual possession. For those in a dominant mode of being, the other person is enjoyable, and even erotically attractive, but she or he does not have to be "plucked," to speak in terms of Tennyson's poem, in order to be enjoyed.

Having-centered persons want to *have* the person they like or admire. This can be seen in relations between parents and their children, between teachers and students, and between friends. Neither partner is satisfied simply to enjoy the other person; each wishes to have the other person for him- or herself. Hence, each is jealous of those who also want to "have" the other. Each partner seeks the other like a shipwrecked sailor seeks a plank —for survival. Predominantly "having" relationships are heavy, burdened, filled with conflicts and jealousies.

Speaking more generally, the fundamental elements in the relation between individuals in the having mode of existence are competition, antagonism, and fear. The antagonistic element in the having relationship stems from its nature. If having is the basis of my sense of identity because "I am what I have," the wish to have must lead to the desire to have much, to have more, to have most. In other words, *greed is* the natural outcome of the having orientation. It can be the greed of the miser or the greed of the profit hunter or the greed of the womanizer or the man chaser. Whatever constitutes their greed, the greedy can never have enough, can never be

“satisfied.” In contrast to physiological needs, such as hunger, that have definite satiation points due to the physiology of the body, *mental* greed—and all greed is mental, even if it is satisfied via the body—has no satiation point, since its consummation does not fill the inner emptiness, boredom, loneliness, and depression it is meant to overcome. In addition, since what one has can be taken away in one form or another, one must have more, in order to fortify one’s existence against such danger. If everyone wants to have more, everyone must fear one’s neighbor’s aggressive intention to take away what one has. To prevent such attack one must become more powerful and preventively aggressive oneself. Besides, since production, great as it may be, can never keep pace with *unlimited* desires, there must be competition and antagonism among individuals in the struggle for getting the most. And the strife would continue even if a state of absolute abundance could be reached; those who have less in physical health and in attractiveness, in gifts, in talents would bitterly envy those who have “more.”

That the having mode and the resulting greed necessarily lead to interpersonal antagonism and strife holds true for nations as it does for individuals. For as long as nations are composed of people whose main motivation is having and greed, they cannot help waging war. They necessarily covet what another nation has, and attempt to get what they want by war, economic pressure, or threats. They will use these procedures against weaker nations, first of all, and form alliances that are stronger than the nation that is to be attacked. Even if it has only a reasonable chance to win, a nation will wage war, not because it suffers economically, but because the desire to have more and to conquer is deeply ingrained in the social character.

Of course there are times of peace. But one must distinguish between lasting peace and peace that is a transitory phenomenon, a period of gathering strength, rebuilding one’s industry and army—in other words, between peace that is a permanent state of harmony and peace that is essentially only a truce. While the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had periods of truce, they are characterized by a state of chronic war among the main actors on the historical stage. Peace as a state of lasting harmonious relations between nations is only possible when the having structure is replaced by the being structure. The idea that one can build peace while encouraging the striving for possession and profit is an illusion, and a

dangerous one, because it deprives people of recognizing that they are confronted with a clear alternative: either a radical change of their character or the perpetuity of war. This is indeed an old alternative; the leaders have chosen war and the people followed them. Today and tomorrow, with the incredible increase in the destructiveness of the new weapons, the alternative is no longer war—but mutual suicide.

What holds true of international wars is equally true for class war. The war between classes, essentially the exploiting and the exploited, has always existed in societies that were based on the principle of greed. There was no class war where there was neither a need for or a possibility of exploitation. But there are bound to be classes in any society, even the richest, in which the having mode is dominant. As already noted, given unlimited desires, even the greatest production cannot keep pace with everybody's fantasy of having more than their neighbors. Necessarily, those who are stronger, more clever, or more favored by other circumstances will try to establish a favored position for themselves and try to take advantage of those who are less powerful, either by force and violence or by suggestion. Oppressed classes will overthrow their rulers, and so on; the class struggle might perhaps become less violent, but it cannot disappear as long as greed dominates the human heart. The idea of a classless society in a so-called socialist world filled with the spirit of greed is as illusory—and dangerous—as the idea of permanent peace among greedy nations.

In the being mode, private having (private property) has little affective importance, because I do not need to own something in order to enjoy it, or even in order to use it. In the being mode, more than one person—in fact millions of people—can share in the enjoyment of the same object, since none need—or want—to *have* it, as a condition of enjoying it. This not only avoids strife; it creates one of the deepest forms of human happiness: shared enjoyment. Nothing unites people more (without restricting their individuality) than sharing their admiration and love for a person; sharing an idea, a piece of music, a painting, a symbol; sharing in a ritual—and sharing sorrow. The experience of sharing makes and keeps the relation between two individuals alive; it is the basis of all great religious, political, and philosophical movements. Of course, this holds true only as long as and to the extent that the individuals genuinely love or admire. When religious and political movements ossify, when bureaucracy manages the people by

means of suggestions and threats, the sharing becomes one of things rather than one of experiences.

While nature has devised, as it were, the prototype—or perhaps the symbol—of shared enjoyment in the sexual act, empirically the sexual act is not necessarily an enjoyment that is shared; the partners are frequently so narcissistic, self involved, and possessive that one can speak only of simultaneous, but not of shared pleasure.

In another respect, however, nature offers a less ambiguous symbol for the distinction between having and being. The erection of the penis is entirely functional. The male does not *have* an erection, like a property or a permanent quality (although how many men wish to *have* one is anybody's guess). The penis *is* in a state of erection, as long as the man is in a state of excitement, as long as he desires the person who has aroused his excitement. If for one reason or another something interferes with this excitement, the man *has* nothing. And in contrast to practically all other kinds of behavior, the erection cannot be faked. George Groddeck, one of the most outstanding, although relatively little known, psychoanalysts, used to comment that a man, after all, is a man for only a few minutes; most of the time he is a little boy. Of course, Groddeck did not mean that a man becomes a little boy in his total being, but precisely in that aspect which for many a man is the proof that he is a man. (See the paper I wrote {1943} on "Sex and Character.")

Joy—Pleasure

Master Eckhart taught that aliveness is conducive to *joy*. The modern reader is apt not to pay close attention to the word "joy" and to read it as if Eckhart had written "pleasure." Yet the distinction between joy and pleasure is crucial, particularly so in reference to the distinction between the being and the having modes. It is not easy to appreciate the difference, since we live in a world of "joyless pleasures."

What is pleasure? Even though the word is used in different ways, considering its use in popular thought, it seems best defined as the satisfaction of a desire that does not require activity (in the sense of aliveness) to be satisfied. Such pleasure can be of high intensity: the pleasure in having social success, earning more money, winning a lottery; the conventional sexual pleasure; eating to one's "heart's content"; winning

a race; the state of elation brought about by drinking, trance, drugs; the pleasure in satisfying one's sadism, or one's passion to kill or dismember what is alive.

Of course, in order to become rich or famous, individuals must be very active in the sense of busyness, but not in the sense of the "birth within." When they have achieved their goal they may be "thrilled," "intensely satisfied," feel they have reached a "peak." But what peak? Maybe a peak of excitement, of satisfaction, of a trancelike or an orgiastic state. But they may have reached this state driven by passions that, though human, are nevertheless pathological, inasmuch as they do not lead to an intrinsically adequate solution of the human condition. Such passions do not lead to greater human growth and strength but, on the contrary, to human crippling. The pleasures of the radical hedonists, the satisfaction of ever new cupidities, the pleasures of contemporary society produce different degrees of *excitements.* But they are not conducive to joy. In fact, the lack of joy makes it necessary to seek ever new, ever more exciting pleasures.

In this respect, modern society is in the same position the Hebrews were in three thousand years ago. Speaking to the people of Israel about one of the worst of their sins, Moses said: "You did not serve the Lord your God with *joy* and *gladness* of heart, in the midst of the fullness of all things" (Deuteronomy 28:47). Joy is the concomitant of productive activity. It is not a "peak experience," which culminates and ends suddenly, but rather a plateau, a feeling state that accompanies the productive expression of one's essential human faculties. Joy is not the ecstatic fire of the moment. Joy is the glow that accompanies being.

Pleasure and thrill are conducive to sadness after the so-called peak has been reached; for the thrill has been experienced, but the vessel has not grown. One's inner powers have not increased. One has made the attempt to break through the boredom of unproductive activity and for a moment has unified all one's energies—except reason and love. One has attempted to become superhuman, without being human. One seems to have succeeded to the moment of triumph, but the triumph is followed by deep sadness: because nothing has changed within oneself. The saying "After intercourse the animal is sad" *("Post coitum animal triste est")* expresses the same phenomenon with regard to loveless sex, which is a "peak experience" of intense excitation, hence thrilling and pleasureful, and necessarily followed

by the disappointment of its ending. Joy in sex is experienced only when physical intimacy is at the same time the intimacy of loving.

As is to be expected, joy must play a central role in those religious and philosophical systems that proclaim *being* as the goal of life. Buddhism, while rejecting pleasure, conceives a state of Nirvana to be a state of joy, which is manifested in the reports and pictures of the Buddha's death. (I am indebted to the late D. T. Suzuki for pointing this out to me in a famous picture of the Buddha's death.)

The Old Testament and the later Jewish tradition, while warning against the pleasures that spring from the satisfaction of cupidity, see in joy the mood that accompanies being. The Book of Psalms ends with the group of fifteen psalms that are one great hymn of joy, and the dynamic psalms begin in fear and sadness and end in joy and gladness.[19] The Sabbath is the day of joy, and in the Messianic Time joy will be the prevailing mood. The prophetic literature abounds with the expression of joy in such passages as: "Then there will the virgins rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy" (Jeremiah 31:13) and "With joy you will draw water" (Isaiah 12:3). God calls Jerusalem "the city of my joy" Jeremiah 49:25).

We find the same emphasis in the Talmud: "The joy of a mitzvah [the fulfillment of a religious duty] is the only way to get the holy spirit" (Berakoth 31, a). Joy is considered so fundamental that, according to Talmudic law, the mourning for a close relative, whose death occurred less than a week earlier, must be interrupted by the joy of Sabbath.

The Hasidic movement, whose motto, "Serve God with joy," was a verse from the psalms, created a form of living in which joy was one of the outstanding elements. Sadness and depression were considered signs of spiritual error, if not outright sin.

In the Christian development even the name of the gospels—*Glad* Tidings—shows the central place of gladness and joy. In the New Testament, joy is the fruit of giving up having, while sadness is the mood of the one who hangs onto possessions. (See, for instance, Matthew 13:44 and 19:22.) In many of Jesus' utterances joy is conceived as a concomitant of living in the mode of being. In his last speech to the Apostles, Jesus tells of joy in the final form: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy be in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11).

As indicated earlier, joy also plays a supreme role in Master Eckhart's thinking. Here is one of the most beautiful and poetic expressions of the idea of the creative power of laughter and joy: "When God laughs at the soul and the soul laughs back at God, the persons of the Trinity are begotten. To speak in hyperbole, when the Father laughs to the son and the son laughs back to the Father, that laughter gives pleasure, that pleasure gives joy, that joy gives love and love gives the persons [of the Trinity] of which the Holy Spirit is one" (Blakney, p. 245).

Spinoza gives joy a supreme place in his anthropological ethical system. "Joy," he says, "is man's passage from a lesser to a greater perfection. *Sorrow* is man's passage from a greater to a less perfection" *(Ethics*, 3, def. 2, 3).

Spinoza's statements will be fully understood only if we put them in the context of his whole system of thought. In order not to decay, we must strive to approach the "model of human nature," that is, we must be optimally free, rational, active. We must become what we can be. This is to be understood as the good that is potentially inherent in our nature. Spinoza understands "good" as "everything which we are certain is a means by which we may approach nearer and nearer to the model of human nature we have set before us"; he understands "evil" as "on the contrary … everything which we are certain hinders us from reaching that model" *(Ethics,* 4, Preface). Joy is good; sorrow *(tristitia,* better translated as "sadness," "gloom") is bad. Joy is virtue; sadness is sin.

Joy, then, is what we experience in the process of growing nearer to the goal of becoming ourselves.

Sin and Forgiveness

In its classic concept in Jewish and Christian theological thought, sin is essentially identical with *disobedience* toward the will of God. This is quite apparent in the commonly held source of the first sin, Adam's disobedience. In the Jewish tradition this act was not understood as "original" sin that all of Adam's descendants inherited, as in the Christian tradition, but only as the *first* sin—not necessarily present in Adam's descendants.

Yet the common element is the view that disobedience of God's commands is sin, whatever the commands are. This is not surprising if we consider that the image of God in that part of the biblical story is of a strict

authority, patterned on the role of an Oriental King of Kings. It is furthermore not surprising if we consider that the church, almost from its start, adjusted itself to a social order that, then in feudalism as now in capitalism, required for its functioning strict obedience of the individuals to the laws, those that serve their true interests as well as those that do not. How oppressive or how liberal the laws and what the means for their enforcement are make little difference with regard to the central issue: the people must learn to fear authority, and not only in the person of the "law enforcement" officers because they carry weapons. This fear is not enough of a safeguard for the proper functioning of the state; the citizen must internalize this fear and give his obedience a moral and religious quality: sin.

People respect the laws not only because they are afraid but also because they feel guilty for their disobedience. This feeling of guilt can be overcome by the forgiveness that only the authority itself can grant. The conditions for such forgiveness are: the sinner repents, is punished, and by accepting punishment submits again. The sequence: sin (disobedience) ——> feeling of guilt ——> new submission (punishment) ——> forgiveness, is a vicious circle, inasmuch as each act of disobedience leads to increased obedience. Only a few are not thus cowed. Prometheus is their hero. In spite of the most cruel punishment Zeus afflicts him with, Prometheus does not submit, nor does he feel guilty. He knew that taking the fire away from the gods and giving it to human beings was an act of compassion; he had been disobedient, but he had not sinned. He had, like many other loving heroes (martyrs) of the human race, broken through the equation between disobedience and sin.

Society, though, is not made up of heroes. As long as the tables were set for only a minority, and the majority had to serve the minority's purposes and be satisfied with what was left over, the sense that disobedience is sin had to be cultivated. Both state and church cultivated it, and both worked together, because both had to protect their own hierarchies. The state needed religion to have an ideology that fused disobedience and sin; the church needed believers whom the state had trained in the virtues of obedience. Both used the institution of the family, whose function it was to train the child in obedience from the first moment it showed a will of its own (usually, at the latest, with the beginning of toilet

training). The self-will of the child had to be broken in order to prepare it for its proper functioning later on as a citizen.

Sin in the conventional theological and secular sense is a concept within the authoritarian structure, and this structure belongs to the having mode of existence. Our human center does not lie in ourselves, but in the authority to which we submit. We do not arrive at well-being by our own productive activity, but by passive obedience and the ensuing approval by the authority. We *have* a leader (secular or spiritual, king/ queen or God) in whom we *have* faith; we *have* security … as long as we are—nobody. That the submission is not necessarily conscious as such, that it can be mild or severe, that the psychic and social structure need not be totally authoritarian, but may be only partially so, must not blind us to the fact that *we live in the mode of having to the degree that we internalize the authoritarian structure of our society.*

As Alfons Auer has emphasized very succinctly, Thomas Aquinas' concept of authority, disobedience, and sin is a humanistic one: i.e., sin is not disobedience of irrational authority, but the violation of human *well-being.*[20] *Thus* Aquinas can state: "God can never be insulted by us, except we act against our own well-being" (S.c. gent. 3, 122). To appreciate this position, we must consider that, for Thomas, the human good *(bonum humanum)* is determined neither arbitrarily by purely subjective desires, nor by instinctively given desires ("natural," in the Stoic sense), nor by God's arbitrary will. It is determined by our rational understanding of human nature and of the norms that, based on this nature, are conducive to our optimum growth and well-being. (It should be noted that as an obedient son of the church and a supporter of the existing social order against the revolutionary sects, Thomas Aquinas could not be a pure representative of non-authoritarian ethic; his use of the word "disobedience" for both kinds of disobedience served to obscure the intrinsic contradiction in his position.)

While sin as disobedience is part of the authoritarian and, that is, the *having* structure, it has an entirely different meaning in the non-authoritarian structure, which is rooted in the *being* mode. This other meaning, too, is implied in the biblical story of the Fall and can be understood by a different interpretation of that story. God had put Man into the Garden of Eden and warned him not to eat either from the Tree of Life or from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Seeing that "it was not

good that Man should be alone," God created Woman. Man and Woman should become one. Both were naked, and "they were not ashamed." This statement is usually interpreted in terms of conventional sexual mores, which assume that, naturally, a man and a woman would be ashamed if their genitals were uncovered. But this seems hardly all the text has to say. On a deeper level, this statement could imply that although Man and Woman faced each other totally, they did not, and they even could not, feel ashamed, for they did not experience each other as strangers, as separated individuals, but as "one."

This prehuman situation changes radically after the Fall, when Man and Woman become fully human, i.e., endowed with reason, with awareness of good and evil, with awareness of each other as separate beings, with awareness that their original oneness is broken and that they have become strangers to one another. They are close to each other, and yet they feel separate and distant. They feel the deepest shame there is: the shame of facing a fellow being "nakedly" and simultaneously experiencing the mutual estrangement, the unspeakable abyss that separates each from the other. "They made themselves aprons," thus trying to avoid the full human encounter, the nakedness in which they see each other. But the shame, as well as the guilt, cannot be removed by concealment. They did not reach out to each other in love; perhaps they desired each other physically, but physical union does not heal human estrangement. That they do not love each other is indicated in their attitude toward each other: Eve does not try to protect Adam, and Adam avoids punishment by denouncing Eve as the culprit rather than defending her.

What is the sin they have committed? To face each other as separated, isolated, selfish human beings who cannot overcome their separation in the act of loving union. This sin is rooted in our very human existence. Being deprived of the original harmony with nature, characteristic of the animal whose life is determined by built-in instincts, being endowed with reason and self-awareness, we cannot help experiencing our utter separateness from every other human being. In Catholic theology this state of existence, complete separateness and estrangement from each other, not bridged by love, is the definition of "Hell." It is unbearable for us. We must overcome the torture of absolute separateness in some way: by submission or by domination or by trying to silence reason and awareness. Yet all these ways succeed only for the moment, and block the road to a true solution. There is

but one way to save ourselves from this hell: to leave the prison of our egocentricity, to reach out and to *one* ourselves with the world. If egocentric separateness is the cardinal sin, then the sin is atoned in the act of loving. The very word "atonement" expresses this concept, for it etymologically derives from "at-*onement," the* Middle-English expression for union. Since the sin of separateness is not an act of disobedience, it does not need to be *forgiven.* But it does need to be *healed;* and love, not acceptance of punishment, is the healing factor.

Rainer Funk has pointed out to me that the concept of sin as disunion has been expressed by some of the church fathers, who followed Jesus' non-authoritarian concept of sin, and suggests the following examples (taken from Henri de Lubac): Origines says, "Where there are sins there is diversity. But where virtue rules there is uniqueness, there is oneness." Maximus Confessor says that through Adam's sin the human race, "which should be a harmonious whole without conflict between mine and thine, was transformed into a dust cloud of individuals." Similar thoughts concerning the destruction of the original unity in Adam can also be found in the ideas of St. Augustine and, as Professor Auer points out, in the teaching of Thomas Aquinas. De Lubac says, summing up: "As work of 'restitution' *(Wiederherstellung)*, the fact of salvation appears necessary as the regaining of the lost oneness, as the restitution of the supernatural oneness with God and at the same time the oneness of men among each other" (my translation; see also "The Concept of Sin and Repentance" in *You Shall Be as Gods* for an examination of the whole problem of sin).

To sum up, in the having mode, and thus the authoritarian structure, sin is disobedience and is overcome by repentance—punishment—renewed submission. In the being mode, the non-authoritarian structure, sin is unresolved estrangement, and it is overcome by the full unfolding of reason and love, by at-onement.

One can indeed interpret the story of the Fall in both ways, because the story itself is a blending of authoritarian and liberating elements. But in themselves the concepts of sin as, respectively, disobedience and alienation are diametrically opposed.

The Old Testament story of the Tower of Babel seems to contain the same idea. The human race has reached here a state of union, symbolized by the fact that all humanity has one language. By their own ambition for power, by their craving to *have* the great tower, the people destroy their

unity and are disunited. In a sense, the story of the Tower is the second "Fall," the sin of historical humanity. The story is complicated by God's being afraid of the people's unity and the power following from it. "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do, and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Genesis 11:6-7). Of course, the same difficulty already exists in the story of the Fall; there God is afraid of the power that man and woman would exercise if they ate of the fruit of both trees.

Fear of Dying—Affirmation of Living

As stated earlier, the fear that one may lose one's possessions is an unavoidable consequence of a sense of security that is based on what one has. I want to carry this thought a step further.

It may be possible for us not to attach ourselves to *property* and, hence, not fear losing it. But what about the fear of losing life itself—the fear of dying? Is this a fear only of older people or of the sick? Or is everybody afraid of dying? Does the fact that we are bound to die permeate our whole life? Does the fear of dying grow only more intense and more conscious the closer we come to the limits of life by age or sickness?

We have need of large systematic studies by psychoanalysts investigating this phenomenon from childhood to old age and dealing with the unconscious as well as the conscious manifestations of the fear of dying. These studies need not be restricted to individual cases; they could examine large groups, using existing methods of sociopsychoanalysis. Since such studies do not now exist, we must draw tentative conclusions from many scattered data.

Perhaps the most significant datum is the deeply engraved desire for immortality that manifests itself in the many rituals and beliefs that aim at preserving the human body. On the other hand, the modern, specifically American denial of death by the "beautification" of the body speaks equally for the repression of the fear of dying by merely camouflaging death.

There is only one way—taught by the Buddha, by Jesus, by the Stoics, by Master Eckhart—to truly overcome the fear of dying, and that way is by *not hanging onto life, not experiencing life as a possession.* The fear of

dying is not truly what it seems to be: the fear of stopping living. Death does not concern us, Epicurus said, “since while we are, death is not yet here; but when death is here we are no more” (Diogenes Laertius). To be sure, there can be fear of suffering and pain that may precede dying, but this fear is different from that of dying. While the fear of dying may thus seem irrational, this is not so if life is experienced as possession. The fear, then, is not of dying, but of *losing what I have:* the fear of losing my body, my ego, my possessions, and my identity; the fear of facing the abyss of nonidentity, of “being lost.”

To the extent that we live in the having mode, we must fear dying. No rational explanation will take away this fear. But it may be diminished, even at the hour of death, by our reassertion of our bond to life, by a response to the love of others that may kindle our own love. Losing our fear of dying should not begin as a preparation for death, but as the continuous effort to *reduce the mode of having and to increase the mode of being.* As Spinoza says, the wise think about life, not about death.

The instruction on how to die is indeed the same as the instruction on how to live. The more we rid ourselves of the craving for possession in all its forms, particularly our egoboundness, the less strong is the fear of dying, since there is nothing to lose.[21]

Here, Now—Past, Future

The mode of being exists only in the here and now *(hic et nunc).* The mode of having exists only in time: past, present, and future.

In the having mode we are bound to what we have amassed in the *past:* money, land, fame, social status, knowledge, children, memories. We think about the past, and we feel by *remembering* feelings (or what appear to be feelings) of the past. (This is the essence of sentimentality.) We *are* the past; we can say: “I am what I was.”

The *future is* the anticipation of what will become the past. It is experienced in the mode of having as is the past and is expressed when one says: “This person *has* a future,” indicating that the individual will *have* many things even though he or she does not now have them. The Ford company’s advertising slogan, “There’s a Ford in your future,” stressed *having* in the future, just as in certain business transactions one buys or sells

“commodity futures.” The fundamental experience of having is the same, whether we deal with past or future.

The *present* is the point where past and future join, a frontier station in time, but not different in quality from the two realms it connects.

Being is not necessarily outside of time, but time is not the dimension that governs being. The painter has to wrestle with color, canvas, and brushes, the sculptor with stone and chisel. Yet the creative act, their “vision” of what they are going to create, transcends time. It occurs in a flash, or in many flashes, but time is not experienced in the vision. The same holds true for the thinkers. Writing down their ideas occurs in time, but conceiving them is a creative event outside of time. It is the same for every manifestation of being. The experience of loving, of joy, of grasping truth does not occur in time, but in the here and now. The *here and now is eternity,* i.e., timelessness. But eternity is not, as popularly misunderstood, indefinitely prolonged time.

One important qualification must be made, though, regarding relationship to the past. Our references here have been to remembering the past, thinking, ruminating about it; in this mode of “having” the past, the past is dead. But one can also bring the past to life. One can experience a situation of the past with the same freshness as if it occurred in the here and now; that is, one can re-create the past, bring it to life (resurrect the dead, symbolically speaking). To the extent that one does so, the past ceases to be the past; it is the here and now.

One can also experience the future as if it were the here and now. This occurs when a future state is so fully anticipated in one’s own experience that it is only the future “objectively,” i.e., in external fact, but not in the subjective experience. This is the nature of genuine utopian thinking (in contrast to utopian daydreaming); it is the basis of genuine faith, which does not need the external realization “in. the future” in order to make the experience of it real.

The whole concept of past, present, and future, i.e., of time, enters into our lives due to our bodily existence: the limited duration of our life, the constant demand of our body to be taken care of, the nature of the physical world that we have to use in order to sustain ourselves. Indeed, we cannot live in eternity; being mortal, we cannot ignore or escape time. The rhythm of night and day, of sleep and wakefulness, of growing and aging, the need to sustain ourselves by work and to defend ourselves, all these factors force

us to *respect* time if we want to live, and our bodies make us want to live. But that we *respect* time is one thing; that we *submit* to it is another. In the mode of being, we respect time, but we do not submit to it. But this respect for time *becomes submission* when the having mode predominates. In this mode not only things are things, but all that is alive becomes a thing. In the mode of having, time becomes our ruler. In the being mode, time is dethroned; it is no longer the idol that rules our life.

In industrial society time rules supreme. The current mode of production demands that every action be exactly "timed," that not only the endless assembly line conveyor belt but, in a less crude sense, most of our activities be ruled by time. In addition, time not only is time, "time is money." The machine must be used maximally; therefore the machine forces its own rhythm upon the worker.

Via the machine, time has become our ruler. Only in our free hours do we seem to have a certain choice. Yet we usually organize our leisure as we organize our work. Or we rebel against tyrant time by being absolutely lazy. By not doing anything except disobeying time's demands, we have the illusion that we are free, when we are, in fact, only paroled from our time-prison.

PART THREE

THE NEW MAN AND THE NEW SOCIETY

VII.
Religion, Character, and Society

THIS CHAPTER DEALS WITH the thesis that social change interacts with a change in the social character; that "religious" impulses contribute the energy necessary to move men and women to accomplish drastic social change, and hence, that a new society can be brought about only if a profound change occurs in the human heart—if a new object of devotion takes the place of the present one.[22]

The Foundations of Social Character

The starting point for these reflections is the statement that the character structure of the average individual and the socioeconomic structure of the society of which he or she is a part are interdependent. I call the blending of the individual psychical sphere and the socioeconomic structure *social character.* (Much earlier, 1932, I had used "libidinous structure of society" to express this phenomenon.) The socioeconomic structure of a society molds the social character of its members so that they *wish* to do what they *have* to do. Simultaneously, the social character influences the socioeconomic structure of society, acting either as cement to give further stability to the social structure or, under special circumstances, as dynamite that tends to break up the social structure.

Social Character vis-à-vis Social Structure

The relation between social character and social structure is never static, since both elements in this relationship are never-ending processes. A change in either factor means a change in both. Many political revolutionaries believe that one must first change the political and economic structure radically, and that then, as a second and almost necessary step, the human mind will also change: that the new society, once established, will quasi-automatically produce the new human being. They

do not see that the new elite, being motivated by the same character as the old one, will tend to recreate the conditions of the old society in the new sociopolitical institutions the revolution has created; that the victory of the revolution will be its defeat as a revolution—although not as a historical phase that paved the way for the socioeconomic development that was hobbled in its full development. The French and Russian revolutions are textbook examples. It is noteworthy that Lenin, who had not believed that quality of character was important for a person's revolutionary function, changed his view drastically in the last year of his life when he sharply saw Stalin's defects of character and demanded, in his last will, that because of these defects Stalin should not become his successor.

On the other side are those who claim that first the nature of human beings must change—their consciousness, their values, their character—and that only then can a truly human society be built. The history of the human race proves them wrong. Purely psychical change has always remained in the private sphere and been restricted to small oases, or has been completely ineffective when the preaching of spiritual values was combined with the practice of the opposite values.

Social Character and "Religious" Needs

The social character has a further and significant function beyond that of serving the needs of society for a certain type of character and satisfying the individual's character—conditioned needs. Social character must fulfill any human being's inherent religious needs. To clarify, "religion" as I use it here does not refer to a system that has necessarily to do with a concept of God or with idols or even to a system perceived as religion, but to *any group-shared system of thought and action that offers the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion.* Indeed, in this broad sense of the word no culture of the past or present, and it seems no culture in the future, can be considered as not having religion.

This definition of "religion" does not tell us anything about its specific content. People may worship animals, trees, idols of gold or stone, an invisible god, a saintly person, or a diabolic leader; they may worship their ancestors, their nation, their class or party, money or success. Their religion may be conducive to the development of destructiveness or of love, of domination or of solidarity; it may further their power of reason or paralyze

it. They may be aware of their system as being a religious one, different from those of the secular realm, or they may think that they have no religion, and interpret their devotion to certain allegedly secular aims, such as power, money, or success, as nothing but their concern for the practical and the expedient. The question is not one of *religion or not?* but of *which kind of religion?* whether it is one that furthers human development, the unfolding of specifically human powers, or one that paralyzes human growth.

A specific religion, provided it is effective in motivating conduct, is not a sum total of doctrines and beliefs; it is rooted in a specific character structure of the individual and, inasmuch as it is the religion of a group, in the social character. Thus, our religious attitude may be considered an aspect of our character structure, for *we are what we are devoted to, and what we are devoted to is what motivates our conduct.* Often, however, individuals are not even aware of the real objects of their personal devotion and mistake their "official" beliefs for their real, though *secret* religion. If, for instance, a man worships power while professing a religion of love, the religion of power is his secret religion, while his so-called official religion, for example Christianity, is only an ideology.

The religious need is rooted in the basic conditions of existence of the human *species.* Ours is a species by itself, just as is the species chimpanzee or horse or swallow. Each species can be and is defined by its specific physiological and anatomical characteristics. There is general agreement on the human species in biological terms. I have proposed that the human species—i.e., human nature—can also be defined *psychically.* In the biological evolution of the animal kingdom the human species emerges when two trends in the animal evolution meet. One trend is *the ever-decreasing determination of behavior by instincts* ("instincts" is used here not in the dated sense of instinct as excluding learning but in the sense of organic drives). Even taking into account the many controversial views about the nature of instincts, it is generally accepted that the higher an animal has risen in the stages of evolution, the less is its behavior determined by phylogenetically programmed instincts.

The process of ever-decreasing determination of behavior by instincts can be plotted as a continuum, at the zero end of which we will find the lowest forms of animal evolution with the highest degree of instinctive determination; this decreases along with animal evolution and reaches a

certain level with the mammals; it decreases further in the development going up to the primates, and even here we find a great gulf between monkeys and apes (as R. M. Yerkes and A. V. Yerkes have shown in their classic investigation, 1929). In the species *Homo,* instinctive determination has reached its minimum.

The other trend to be found in animal evolution is *the growth of the brain, particularly of the neocortex.* Here, too, we can plot the evolution as a continuum: at one end, the lowest animals, with the most primitive nervous structure and a relatively small number of neurons; at the other, *Homo sapiens,* with a larger and more complex brain structure, especially a neocortex three times the size of that of our primate ancestors, and a truly fantastic number of interneuronal connections.

Considering these data, the human species can be defined as the primate who emerged at the point of evolution where instinctive determination had reached a minimum and the development of the brain a maximum. This combination of minimal instinctive determination and maximal brain development had never occurred before in animal evolution and constitutes, biologically speaking, a completely new phenomenon.

Lacking the capacity to act by the command of instincts while possessing the capacity for self-awareness, reason, and imagination—new qualities that go beyond the capacity for instrumental thinking of even the cleverest primates—the human species needed a *frame of orientation* and an *object of devotion* in order to survive.

Without a map of our natural and social world—a picture of the world and of one's place in it that is structured and has inner cohesion—human beings would be confused and unable to act purposefully and consistently, for there would be no way of orienting oneself, of finding a fixed point that permits one to organize all the impressions that impinge upon each individual. Our world makes sense to us, and we feel certain about our ideas, through the consensus with those around us. Even if the map is wrong, it fulfills its psychological function. But the map has never been entirely wrong—nor has it ever been entirely right. It has always been enough of an approximation to the explanation of phenomena to serve the purpose of living. Only to the degree that the *practice* of life is freed from its contradictions and its irrationality can the map correspond to reality.

The impressive fact is that no culture has been found in which such a frame of orientation does not exist. Neither has any individual. Often

individuals may disclaim having any such overall picture and believe that they respond to the various phenomena and incidents of life from case to case, as their judgment guides them. But it can be easily demonstrated that they simply take their own philosophy for granted because to them it is only common sense, and they are unaware that all their concepts rest upon a commonly accepted frame of reference. When such persons are confronted with a fundamentally different total view of life, they judge it as “crazy” or “irrational” or “childish,” while they consider themselves as being only “logical.” The deep need for a frame of reference is particularly evident in children. At a certain age, children will often make up their own frame of orientation in an ingenious way, using the few data available to them.

But a map is not enough as a guide for action; we also need a goal that tells us where to go. Animals have no such problems. Their instincts provide them with a map as well as, with goals. But lacking instinctive determination and having a brain that permits us to think of many directions in which we can go, we need an object of total devotion, a focal point for all our strivings and the basis for all our effective—not only our proclaimed—values. We need such an object of devotion in order to integrate our energies in one direction, to transcend our isolated existence, with all its doubts and insecurities, and to answer our need for a meaning to life.

Socioeconomic structure, character structure, and religious structure are inseparable from each other. If the religious system does not correspond to the prevalent social character, if it conflicts with the social practice of life, it is only an ideology. We have to look behind it for the *real* religious structure, even though we may not be conscious of it as such—unless the human energies inherent in the religious structure of character act as dynamite and tend to undermine the given socioeconomic conditions. However, as there are always individual exceptions to the dominant social character, there are also individual exceptions to the dominant religious character. They are often the leaders of religious revolutions and the founders of new religions.

The “religious” orientation, as the experiential core of all “high” religions, has been mostly perverted in the development of these religions. The way individuals consciously conceive of their personal orientation does not matter; they may be “religious” without considering themselves to be so—or they may be nonreligious, although considering themselves Christian. We have no word to demote the *experiential* content of religion, aside from

its conceptual and institutional aspect. Hence, I use quotation marks to denote "religious" in the *experiential,* subjective orientation, regardless of the conceptual structure in which the person's "religiosity" is expressed.[23]

Is the Western World Christian?

According to the history books and the opinion of most people, Europe's conversion to Christianity took place first within the Roman Empire under Constantine, followed by the conversion of the heathen in Northern Europe by Bonifacius, the "Apostle of the Germans," and others in the eighth century. *But was Europe ever truly Christianized?*

In spite of the affirmative answer generally given to this question, a closer analysis shows that Europe's conversion to Christianity was largely a sham; that at most one could speak of a limited conversion to Christianity from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries and that for the centuries before and after this period the conversion was, for the most part, one to an ideology and a more or less serious submission to the church; it did not mean a change of heart, i.e., of the character structure, except for numerous genuinely Christian movements. In these four hundred years Europe had begun to be Christianized. The church tried to enforce the application of Christian principles on the handling of property, prices, and support of the poor. Many partly heretic leaders and sects arose, largely under the influence of mysticism that demanded the return to the principles of Christ, including the condemnation of property. Mysticism, culminating in Master Eckhart, played a decisive role in this antiauthoritarian humanistic movement and, not accidentally, women became prominent as mystical teachers and as students. Ideas of a world religion or of a simple undogmatic Christianity were voiced by many Christian thinkers; even the idea of the God of the Bible became questionable. The theological and non-theological humanists of the Renaissance, in their philosophy and in their Utopias, continued the line of the thirteenth century, and indeed, between the Late Middle Ages (the "Medieval Renaissance") and the Renaissance proper no sharp dividing line exists. To show the spirit of the High and the Late Renaissance, I quote Frederick B. Artz's summary picture:

> In society, the great mediaeval thinkers held that all men are equal in the sight of God and that even the humblest has an infinite worth. In

> economics, they taught that work is a source of dignity not of degradation, that no man should be used for an end independent of his welfare, and that justice should determine wages and prices. In politics, they taught that the function of the state is moral, that law and its administration should be imbued with Christian ideas of justice, and that the relations of ruler and ruled should always be founded on reciprocal obligation. The state, property, and the family are all trusts from God to those who control them, and they must be used to further divine purposes. Finally, the mediaeval ideal included the strong belief that all nations and peoples are part of one great community. As Goethe said, "Above the nations is humanity," or as Edith Cavell wrote in 1915 in the margin of her *Imitation of Christ* the night before she was executed, "Patriotism is not enough."

Indeed, had European history continued in the spirit of the thirteenth century, had it developed the spirit of scientific knowledge and individualism slowly and in an evolutionary way, we might now have been in a fortunate position. But reason began to deteriorate into manipulative intelligence and individualism into selfishness. The short period of Christianization ended and Europe returned to its original paganism.

However the concepts may differ, one belief defines any branch of Christianity: the belief in Jesus Christ as the Savior who gave his life out of love for his fellow creatures. He was the hero of love, a hero without power, who did not use force, who did not want to rule, who did not want to *have* anything. He was a hero of being, of giving, of sharing. These qualities deeply appealed to the Roman poor as well as to some of the rich, who choked on their selfishness. Jesus appealed to the hearts of the people, even though from an intellectual standpoint he was at best considered to be naïve. This belief in the hero of love won hundreds of thousands of adherents, many of whom changed their practice of life, or became martyrs themselves.

The Christian hero was the martyr, for as in the Jewish tradition, the highest achievement was to give one's life for God or for one's fellow beings. The martyr is the exact opposite of the pagan hero personified in the Greek and Germanic heroes. The heroes' aim was to conquer, to be victorious, to destroy, to rob; their fulfillment of life was pride, power, fame, and superior skill in killing (St. Augustine compared Roman history

with that of a band of robbers). For the pagan hero a man's worth lay in his prowess in attaining and holding onto power, and he gladly died on the battlefield in the moment of victory. Homer's *Iliad is* the poetically magnificent description of glorified conquerors and robbers. The martyr's characteristics are *being*, giving, sharing; the hero's, *having*, exploiting, forcing. (It should be added that the formation of the pagan hero is connected with the patriarchal victory over mother-centered society. Men's dominance of women is the first act of conquest and the first exploitative use of force; in all patriarchal societies after the men's victory, these principles have become the basis of men's character.)

Which of the two irreconcilably opposed models for our own development still prevails in Europe? If we look into ourselves, into the behavior of almost all people, into our political leaders, it is undeniable that our model of what is good and valuable is the pagan hero. European-North American history, in spite of the conversion to the church, is a history of conquest, pride, greed; our highest values are: to be stronger than others, to be victorious, to conquer others and exploit them. These values coincide with our ideal of "manliness": only the one who can fight and conquer is a man; anyone who is not strong in the use of force is weak, i.e., "unmanly."

It is not necessary to prove that the history of Europe is a history of conquest, exploitation, force, subjugation. Hardly any period is not characterized by these factors, no race or class exempted, often including genocide, as with the American Indians, and even such religious enterprises as the Crusades are no exception. Was this behavior only outwardly economically or politically motivated, and were the slave traders, the rulers of India, the killers of Indians, the British who forced the Chinese to open their land to the import of opium, the instigators of two World Wars and those who prepare the next war, were all these Christians in their hearts? Or were perhaps only the leaders rapacious pagans while the great mass of the population remained Christians? If this were so, we might feel more cheerful. Unfortunately, it is not so. To be sure, the leaders were often more rapacious than their followers because they had more to gain, but they could not have realized their plans were it not that the wish to conquer and to be victorious was and still is part of the social character.

One has only to recall the wild, crazy enthusiasm with which people participated in the various wars of the past two centuries—the readiness of millions to risk national suicide in order to protect the image of "the

strongest power," or of "honor," or of profits. And for another example, consider the frenzied nationalism of people watching the contemporary Olympic Games, which allegedly serve the cause of peace. Indeed, the popularity of the Olympic Games is in itself a symbolic expression of Western paganism. They celebrate the pagan hero: the winner, the strongest, the most self-assertive, while overlooking the dirty mixture of business and publicity that characterizes the contemporary imitation of the Greek Olympic Games. In a Christian culture the Passion Play would take the place of Olympic Games; yet the one famous Passion Play we have is the tourist sensation in Oberammergau.

If all this is correct, why do not Europeans and Americans frankly abandon Christianity as not fitting our times? There are several reasons: for example, religious ideology is needed in order to keep people from losing discipline and thus threatening social coherence. But there is a still more important reason: people who are firm believers in Christ as the great lover, the self-sacrificing God, can turn this belief, in an alienated way, into the experience that it is Jesus who loves for *them.* Jesus thus becomes an idol; the belief in him becomes the substitute for one's own act of loving. In a simple, unconscious formula: "Christ does all the loving for us; we can go on in the pattern of the Greek hero, yet we are saved because the alienated 'faith' in Christ is a substitute for the *imitation* of Christ." That Christian belief is also a cheap cover for one's own rapacious attitude goes without saying. Finally, I believe that human beings are so deeply endowed with a need to love that acting as wolves causes us necessarily to have a guilty conscience. Our professed belief in love anesthetizes us to some degree against the pain of the unconscious feeling of guilt for being entirely without love.

"Industrial Religion"

The religious and philosophical development after the end of the Middle Ages is too complex to be treated within the present volume. It can be characterized by the struggle between two principles: the Christian, spiritual tradition in theological or philosophical forms and the pagan tradition of idolatry and inhumanity that assumed many forms in the development of what might be called the "religion of industrialism and the cybernetic era."

Following the tradition of the Late Middle Ages, the humanism of the Renaissance was the first great flowering of the "religious" spirit after the end of the Middle Ages. The ideas of human dignity, of the unity of the human race, of universal political and religious unity found in it an unencumbered expression. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Enlightenment expressed another great flowering of humanism. Carl Becker (1932) has shown to what extent the Enlightenment philosophy expressed the "religious attitude" that we find in the theologians of the thirteenth century: "If we examine the foundation of this faith, we find that at every turn the *Philosophers* betrayed their debt to medieval thought without being aware of it." The French Revolution, to which Enlightenment philosophy had given birth, was more than a political revolution. As Tocqueville noted (quoted by Becker), it was a "political revolution which functioned in the manner and which took on in some sense the aspect of a *religious revolution* [emphasis added]. Like Islamism and the Protestant revolt it overflowed the frontiers of countries and nations and was extended by preaching and propaganda."

Radical humanism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is described later on, in my discussion of the humanist protest against the paganism of the industrial age. But to provide a base for that discussion we must now look at the new paganism that has developed side by side with humanism, threatening at the present moment of history to destroy us.

The change that prepared the first basis for the development of the "industrial religion" was the elimination, by Luther, of the motherly element in the church. Although it may appear an unnecessary detour, I must dwell on this problem for a while, because it is important to our understanding of the development of the new religion and the new social character.

Societies have been organized according to two principles: patricentric (or patriarchal) and matricentric (or matriarchal). The matricentric principle, as J. J. Bachofen and L. H. Morgan have shown for the first time, is centered in the figure of the loving mother. The motherly principle is that of *unconditional love;* the mother loves her children not because they please her, but because they are her (or another woman's) children. For this reason the mother's love cannot be acquired by good behavior, nor can it be lost by sinning. Motherly love is *mercy* and *compassion* (in Hebrew *rachamim,* the root of which is *rechem,* the "womb").

Fatherly love, on the contrary, is *conditional;* it depends on the achievements and good behavior of the child; father loves that child most who is most like him, i.e., whom he wishes to inherit his property. Father's love can be lost, but it can also be regained by repentance and renewed submission. Father's love is *justice.*

The two principles, the feminine-motherly and the masculine-fatherly, correspond not only to the presence of a masculine and feminine side in any human being but specifically to the need for mercy *and* justice in every man and woman. The deepest yearning of human beings seems to be a constellation in which the two poles (motherliness and fatherliness, female and male, mercy and justice, feeling and thought, nature and intellect) are united in a synthesis, in which both sides of the polarity lose their mutual antagonism and, instead, color each other. While such a synthesis cannot be fully reached in a patriarchal society, it existed to some extent in the Roman Church. The Virgin, the church as the all-loving mother, the pope and the priest as motherly figures represented motherly, unconditional, all-forgiving love, side by side with the fatherly elements of a strict, patriarchal bureaucracy with the pope at the top ruling by power.

Corresponding to these motherly elements in the religious system was the relationship toward nature in the process of production: the work of the peasant as well as of the artisan was not a hostile exploitative attack against nature. It was cooperation with nature: not raping but transforming nature according to its own laws.

Luther established a purely patriarchal form of Christianity in Northern Europe that was based on the urban middle class and the secular princes. The essence of this new social character is submission under patriarchal authority, with *work* as the only way to obtain love and approval.

Behind the Christian façade arose a new *secret* religion, "industrial religion," that is rooted in the character structure of modern society, but is not recognized as "religion." The industrial religion is incompatible with genuine Christianity. It reduces people to servants of the economy and of the machinery that their own hands build.

The industrial religion had its basis in a new social character. Its center was fear of and submission to powerful male authorities, cultivation of the sense of guilt for disobedience, dissolution of the bonds of human solidarity by the supremacy of self-interest and mutual antagonism. The "sacred" in industrial religion was work, property, profit, power, even though it

furthered individualism and freedom within the limits of its general principles. By transforming Christianity into a strictly patriarchal religion it was still possible to express the industrial religion in Christian terminology.

The “Marketing Character” and “Cybernetic Religion”

The most important fact for understanding both the character and the secret religion of contemporary human society is the change in the social character from the earlier era of capitalism to the second part of the twentieth century. The authoritarian-obsessive-hoarding character that had begun to develop in the sixteenth century, and continued to be the dominant character structure at least in the middle classes until the end of the nineteenth century, was slowly blended with or replaced by the *marketing character*. (I described the blends of various character orientations in *Man for Himself.)*

I have called this phenomenon the marketing character because it is based on experiencing oneself as a commodity, and one’s value not as “use value” but as “exchange value.” The living being becomes a commodity on the “personality market.” The principle of evaluation is the same on both the personality and the commodity markets: on the one, personalities are offered for sale; on the other, commodities. Value in both cases is their exchange value, for which “use value” is a necessary but not a sufficient condition.

Although the proportion of skill and human qualities on the one hand and personality on the other hand as prerequisites for success varies, the “personality factor” always plays a decisive role. Success depends largely on how well persons sell themselves on the market, how well they get their “personality” across, how nice a “package” they are; whether they are “cheerful,” “sound,” “aggressive,” “reliable,” “ambitious”; furthermore, what their family backgrounds are, what clubs they belong to, and whether they know the “right” people. The type of personality required depends to some degree on the special field in which a person may choose to work. A stockbroker, a salesperson, a secretary, a railroad executive, a college professor, or a hotel manager must each offer a different kind of personality that, regardless of their differences, must fulfill one condition: to be in demand.

What shapes one's attitude toward oneself is the fact that skill and equipment for performing a given task are not sufficient; one must win in competition with many others in order to have success. If it were enough for the purpose of making a living to rely on what one knows and what one can do, one's self-esteem would be in proportion to one's capacities, that is, to one's use value. But since success depends largely on how one sells one's personality, one experiences oneself as a commodity or, rather, simultaneously as the seller *and* the commodity to be sold. A person is not concerned with his or her life and happiness, but with becoming salable.

The aim of the marketing character is complete adaptation, so as to be desirable under all conditions of the personality market. The marketing character personalities do not even *have* egos (as people in the nineteenth century did) to hold onto, that belong to them, that do not change. For they constantly change their egos, according to the principle: "I am as you desire me."

Those with the marketing character structure are without goals, except moving, doing things with the greatest efficiency; if asked *why* they must move so fast, why things have to be done with the greatest efficiency, they have no genuine answer, but offer rationalizations, such as, "in order to create more jobs," or "in order to keep the company growing." They have little interest (at least consciously) in philosophical or religious questions, such as *why* one lives, and *why* one is going in this direction rather than in another. They have their big, ever-changing egos, but none has a self, a core, a sense of identity. The "identity crisis" of modern society is actually the crisis produced by the fact that its members have become selfless instruments, whose identity rests upon their participation in the corporations (or other giant bureaucracies). Where there is no authentic self, there can be no identity.

The marketing character neither loves nor hates. These "old-fashioned" emotions do not fit into a character structure that functions almost entirely on the cerebral level and avoids feelings, whether good or evil ones, because they interfere with the marketing characters' main purpose: selling and exchanging—or to put it even more precisely, *functioning* according to the logic of the "megamachine" of which they are a part, without asking any questions except how well they function, as indicated by their advancement in the bureaucracy.

Since the marketing characters have no deep attachment to themselves or to others, they do not care, in any deep sense of the word, not because they are so selfish but because their relations to others and to themselves are so thin. This may also explain why they are not concerned with the dangers of nuclear and ecological catastrophes, even though they know all the data that point to these dangers. That they are not concerned with the danger to their personal lives might still be explained by the assumption that they have great courage and unselfishness; but the lack of concern even for their children and grandchildren excludes such explanation. The lack of concern on all these levels is the result of the loss of any emotional ties, even to those "nearest" to them. The fact is, nobody is close to the marketing characters; neither are they close to themselves.

The puzzling question why contemporary human beings love to buy and to consume, and yet are so little attached to what they buy, finds its most significant answer in the marketing character phenomenon. The marketing characters' lack of attachment also makes them indifferent to things. What matters is perhaps the prestige or the comfort that things give, but things per se have no substance. They are utterly expendable, along with friends or lovers, who are expendable, too, since no deeper tie exists to any of them.

The marketing character goal, *"proper functioning"* under the given circumstances, makes them respond to the world mainly cerebrally. Reason in the sense of *understanding* is an exclusive quality of *Homo sapiens; manipulative intelligence* as a tool for the achievement of practical purposes is common to animals and humans. Manipulative intelligence without reason is dangerous because it makes people move in directions that may be self-destructive from the standpoint of reason. In fact, the more brilliant the uncontrolled manipulative intelligence is, the more dangerous it is.

It was no less a scientist than Charles Darwin who demonstrated the consequences and the human tragedy of a purely scientific, alienated intellect. He writes in his autobiography that until his thirtieth year he had intensely enjoyed music and poetry and pictures, but that for many years afterward he lost all his taste for these interests: "My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of fact. … The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by

enfeebling the emotional part of our nature." (Quoted by E. F. Schumacher; q.v.)

The process Darwin describes here has continued since his time at a rapid pace; the separation from reason and heart is almost complete. It is of special interest that this deterioration of reason had not taken place in the majority of the leading investigators in the most exacting and revolutionary sciences (in theoretical physics, for example) and that they were people who were deeply concerned with philosophical and spiritual questions. I refer to such individuals as A. Einstein, N. Bohr, L. Szillard, W. Heisenberg, E. Schrödinger.

The supremacy of cerebral, manipulative thinking goes together with an atrophy of emotional life. Since it is not cultivated or needed, but rather an impediment to optimal functioning, emotional life has remained stunted and never matured beyond the level of a child's. As a result the marketing characters are peculiarly naive as far as emotional problems are concerned. They may be attracted by "emotional people," but because of their own naiveté, they often cannot judge whether such people are genuine or fakers. This may explain why so many fakers can be successful in the spiritual and religious fields; it may also explain why politicians who portray strong emotions have a strong appeal for the marketing character—and why the marketing character cannot discriminate between a genuinely religious person and the public relations product who fakes strong religious emotions.

The term "marketing character" is by no means the only one to describe this type. It can also be described by using a Marxian term, the *alienated character;* persons of this character are alienated from their work, from themselves, from other human beings, and from nature. In psychiatric terms the marketing person could be called a schizoid character; but the term may be slightly misleading, because a schizoid person living with other schizoid persons and performing well and being successful lacks the feeling of uneasiness that the schizoid character has in a more "normal" environment.

During the final revision of the manuscript of this book I had the opportunity to read Michael Maccoby's forthcoming work *The Gamesmen: The New Corporate Leaders* in manuscript.[24] In this penetrating study Maccoby analyzes the character structure of two hundred and fifty executives, managers, and engineers in two of the best-run large companies

in the United States. Many of his findings confirm what I have described as features of the cybernetic person, particularly the predominance of the cerebral along with the underdevelopment of the emotional sphere. Considering that the executives and managers described by Maccoby are or will be among the leaders of American society, the social importance of Maccoby's findings is substantial.

The following data, drawn by Maccoby from his three to twenty personal interviews with each member of the group studied, give us a clear picture of this character type.[25]

Deep scientific interest in understanding, dynamic sense of the work, animated	0 %
Centered, enlivening, craftsman like, but lacks deeper scientific interest in the nature of things	22 %
The work itself stimulates interest, which is not self-sustained	58 %
Moderate productive, not centered. Interest in work is essentially instrumental, to ensure security, income	18 %
Passive unproductive, diffused	2 %
Rejecting of work, rejects the real world	0 %
	100 %

Two features are striking: (1) deep interest in understanding ("reason") is absent, and (2) for the vast majority either the stimulation of their work is not self-sustaining or the work is essentially a means for ensuring economic security.

In complete contrast is the picture of what Maccoby calls "the love scale":

Loving, affirmative, creatively stimulating	0 %
Responsible, warm, affectionate, but not deeply loving	5 %
Moderate interest in another person, with more loving possibilities	40 %

Conventional concern, decent, role oriented	41%
Passive, unloving, uninterested	13 %
Rejecting of life, hardened heart	1 %
	100%

No one in the study could be characterized as deeply loving, although 5 percent show up as being “warm and affectionate.” All the rest are listed as having moderate interest, or conventional concern, or as unloving, or outright rejecting of life—indeed a striking picture of emotional underdevelopment in contrast to the prominence of cerebralism.

The “cybernetic religion” of the marketing character corresponds to that total character structure. Hidden behind the facade of agnosticism or Christianity is a thoroughly pagan religion, although people are not conscious of it as such. This pagan religion is difficult to describe, since it can only be inferred from what people do (and do *not* do) and not from their conscious thoughts about religion or dogmas of a religious organization. Most striking, at first glance, is that Man has made himself into a god because he has acquired the technical capacity for a “second creation” of the world, replacing the first creation by the God of traditional religion. We can also formulate: We have made the machine into a god and have become godlike by serving the machine. It matters little the formulation we choose; what matters is that human beings, in the state of their greatest real *impotence, imagine* themselves in connection with science and technique to be *omnipotent.*

The more we are caught in our isolation, in our lack of emotional response to the world, and at the same time the more unavoidable a catastrophic end seems to be, the more malignant becomes the new religion. We cease to be the masters of technique and become instead its slaves—and technique, once a vital element of creation, shows its other face as the goddess of destruction (like the Indian goddess Kali), to which men and women are willing to sacrifice themselves and their children. While consciously still hanging onto the hope for a better future, cybernetic humanity represses the fact that they have become worshipers of the goddess of destruction.

This thesis has many kinds of proof, but none more compelling than these two: that the great (and even some smaller) powers continue to build

nuclear weapons of ever-increasing capacity for destruction and do not arrive at the one sane solution—destruction of all nuclear weapons and the atomic energy plants that deliver the material for nuclear weapons and that virtually nothing is done to end the danger of ecological catastrophe. In short, nothing serious is being done to plan for the survival of the human race.

The Humanist Protest

The dehumanization of the social character and the rise of the industrial and cybernetic religions led to a protest movement, to the emergence of a new humanism, that has its roots in Christian and philosophical humanism from the Late Middle Ages to the Age of Enlightenment. This protest found expression in theistic Christian as well as in pantheistic or non-theistic philosophical formulations. It came from two opposite sides: from the romantics, who were politically conservatives, and from the Marxian and other socialists (and some anarchists). The right and the left were unanimous in their critique of the industrial system and the damage it did to human beings. Catholic thinkers, such as Franz von Baader, and conservative political leaders, such as Benjamin Disraeli, formulated the problem, sometimes in identical ways to those of Marx.

The two sides differed in the ways they thought human beings could be saved from the danger of being transformed into things. The romantics on the right believed that the only way was to stop the unhindered “progress” of the industrial system and to return to previous forms of the social order, though with some modifications.

The protest from the left may be called *radical humanism,* even though it was sometimes expressed in theistic and sometimes in non-theistic terms. The socialists believed that the economic development could not be halted, that one could not return to a previous form of social order, and that the only way to salvation lay in going forward and creating a new society that would free people from alienation, from submission to the machine, from the fate of being dehumanized. Socialism was the synthesis of medieval religious tradition and the post-Renaissance spirit of scientific thinking and political action. It was, like Buddhism, a “religious” mass movement that, even though speaking in secular and atheistic terms, aimed at the liberation of human beings from selfishness and greed.

At least a brief commentary is necessary to explain my characterization of Marxian thought, in view of its complete perversion by Soviet communism and reformist Western socialism to a materialism aimed at achieving wealth for everybody. As Hermann Cohen, Ernst Bloch, and a number of other scholars have stated during the past decades, socialism was the secular expression of prophetic Messianism. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate this is to quote from the Code of Maimonides his characterization of the Messianic Time:

> The Sages and Prophets did not long for the days of the Messiah that Israel might exercise dominion over the world, or rule over the heathens, or be exalted by the nations, or that it might eat and drink and rejoice. Their aspiration was that Israel be free to devote itself to the Law and its wisdom, with no one to oppress or disturb it, and thus be worthy of life in the world to come.
>
> In that era there will be neither famine nor war, neither jealousy nor strife. Earthly goods[26] will be abundant, comforts within the reach of all. The one preoccupation of the whole world will be to know the Lord. Hence Israelites will be very wise, they will know the things that are now concealed and will attain an understanding of their creator to the utmost capacity of the human mind, as it is written: For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

In this description the goal of history is to enable human beings to devote themselves entirely to the study of wisdom and the knowledge of God; not power or luxury. The Messianic Time is one of universal peace, absence of envy, and material abundance. This picture is very close to the concept of the goal of life as Marx expressed it toward the end of the third volume of his *Capital:*

> The realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of external utility is required. In the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term. Just as the savage must wrestle with nature, in order to satisfy his wants, in order to maintain his life and reproduce it, so civilized man has to do it, and he

> must do it in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production. With his development the realm of natural necessity expands, because his wants increase; but at the same time the forces of production increase, by which these wants are satisfied. The freedom in this field cannot consist of anything else but of the fact that socialized man, the associated producers, regulate their interchange with nature rationally, bring it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by some blind power; that they accomplish their task with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most adequate to their human nature and *most worthy of it.* But it always remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that *development of human power which is its own end,* the true realm of freedom, which, however, can flourish only upon that realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working day is its fundamental premise. [Emphasis added.]

Marx, like Maimonides—and in contrast to Christian and to other Jewish teachings of salvation—does not postulate a final eschatological solution; the discrepancy between Man and nature remains, but the realm of necessity is brought under human control as much as possible: "But it always remains a realm of necessity." The goal is "*that development of human power which is its own end, the true realm of freedom"* (emphasis added). Maimonides' view that "the preoccupation of the whole world will be to know the Lord" is to Marx the "development of human power … [as] its own end."

Having and being as two different forms of human existence are at the center of Marx's ideas for the emergence of new Man. With these modes Marx proceeds from economic to psychological and anthropological categories, which are, as we have seen in our discussion of the Old and New Testaments and Eckhart, at the same time fundamental "religious" categories. Marx wrote:

> "Private property has made us so stupid and partial that an object is only ours when we have it, when it exists for us as capital or when it is directly eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., in short, *utilized* in some way. … Thus *all* the physical and intellectual senses have been replaced by the simple alienation of *all* these senses; the sense of

> *having.* The human being had to be reduced to this absolute poverty in order to be able to give birth to all his inner wealth. (On the category of *having* see Hess in *Einundzwanzig Bogen.*)"[27]

Marx's concept of being and having is summarized in his sentence:

> "The less you *are* and the less you express your life—the more you *have* and the greater is your alienated life. … Everything the economist takes away from you in the way of life and humanity, he restores to you in the form of money and wealth."

The "sense of having" about which Marx speaks here is precisely the same as the "egoboundness" of which Eckhart speaks, the craving for things and for one's ego. Marx refers to the *having mode of existence*, not to possession as such, not to unalienated private property as such. The goal is not luxury and wealth, nor is it poverty; in fact, *both* luxury and poverty are looked upon by Marx as vices. The goal is "to give birth."

What is this act of giving birth? It is the active, unalienated expression of our faculty toward the corresponding objects. Marx continues: "All his [Man's] *human* relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, thinking, observing, feeling, desiring, acting, loving—in short all the organs of his individuality … are in their objective action [their *action in relation to the object]* the appropriation of this object, the appropriation of human reality." This is the form of appropriation in the mode of *being*, not in the mode of having. Marx expressed this form of non-alienated activity in the following passage:

> Let us assume *man* to be *man*, and his relation to the world to be a human one. Then love can only be exchanged for love, trust for trust, etc. If you wish to enjoy art, you must be an artistically cultivated person; if you wish to influence other people, you must be a person who really has a stimulating and encouraging effect upon others. Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a *specific expression*, corresponding to the object of your will, of your *real individual* life. If you love without evoking love in return, i.e., if you are not able, by the *manifestation* of yourself as a loving person, to make yourself a *beloved person*, then your love is impotent and a misfortune.

But Marx's ideas were soon perverted, perhaps because he lived a hundred years too soon. Both he and Engels thought that capitalism had already reached the end of its possibilities and, hence, that the revolution was just around the corner. But they were thoroughly mistaken, as Engels was to state after Marx's death. They had pronounced their new teaching at the very height of capitalist development and did not foresee that it would take more than a hundred years for capitalism's decline and the final crisis to begin. It was a historical necessity that an anticapitalist idea, propagated at the very peak of capitalism, had to be utterly transformed into the capitalist spirit if it was to be successful. And this is what actually happened.

Western social democrats and their bitter opponents, communists within and without the Soviet Union, transformed socialism into a purely economic concept, the goal of which was maximum consumption, maximum use of machines. Khrushchev, with his concept of "goulash" communism, in his simple and folksy manner let the truth out of the bag: The aim of socialism was to give the whole population the same pleasure of consumption as capitalism gave only to a minority. Socialism and communism were built on the bourgeois concept of materialism. Some phrases of Marx's earlier writings (which, on the whole, were denigrated as "idealistic" errors of the "young" Marx) were recited as ritualistically as the words of the gospels are cited in the West.

That Marx lived at the height of capitalist development had another consequence: as a child of his time Marx could not help adopting attitudes and concepts current in bourgeois thought and practice. Thus, for instance, certain authoritarian inclinations in his personality as well as in his writings were molded by the patriarchal bourgeois spirit rather than by the spirit of socialism. He followed the pattern of the classical economists in his construction of "scientific" versus "utopian" socialism. Just as the economists claimed that economics was following its own laws quite independently of human will, Marx sensed the need to prove that socialism would *necessarily* develop according to the laws of economics. Consequently, he sometimes tended to develop formulations that could be misunderstood as deterministic, not giving a sufficient role to human will and imagination in the historical process. Such unintended concessions to the spirit of capitalism facilitated the process of perverting Marx's system into one that was not fundamentally different from capitalism.

If Marx had pronounced his ideas today, at the beginning—and rapidly increasing—decline of capitalism, his *real* message would have had a chance to be influential or even victorious, provided one can make such a historical conjecture. As it is, even the words "socialism" and "communism" are compromised. At any rate, every socialist or communist party that could claim to represent Marxian thought would have to be based on the conviction that the Soviet regimes are *not* socialist systems in any sense, that socialism is incompatible with a bureaucratic, thing-centered, consumption-oriented social system, that it is incompatible with the materialism and cerebralization that characterize the Soviet, like the capitalist, system.

The corruption of socialism explains the fact that genuine radical humanist thoughts often come from groups and individuals who were not identified with the ideas of Marx or who were even opposed to them, sometimes after having been active members of the communist movement.

While it is impossible to mention here all the radical humanists of the post-Marxian period, some examples of their thinking are given on the following pages. Though the conceptualizations of these radical humanists differed widely, and sometimes seem to contradict each other completely, they all share the following ideas and attitudes:

- that production must serve the real needs of the people, not the demands of the economic system;
- that a new relation must be established between people and nature, one of cooperation not of exploitation;
- that mutual antagonism must be replaced by solidarity;
- that the aim of all social arrangements must be human well-being and the prevention of ill-being;
- that not maximum consumption but sane consumption that furthers well-being must be striven for;
- that the individual must be an active, not a passive, participant in social life.[28]

Albert Schweitzer starts from the radical premise of the imminent crisis of Western culture. "It is obvious to everybody," he states, "that we are in a process of cultural self-destruction. What is left is also not secure any more.

It still stands because it was not exposed to the destructive pressure to which the rest has already succumbed. But it too is built on gravel *[Geröll]*. The next landslide *[Bergrutsch]* can take it along. … The cultural capacity of modern Man is diminished because the circumstances which surround him diminish him and damage him psychically."[29]

Characterizing the industrial being as "unfree … unconcentrated … incomplete … in danger of losing his humanity," he continues:

> Because society with its developed organization exercises a hitherto unknown power over Man, Man's dependency on it has grown to a degree that he almost has ceased to live a mental *[geistig]* existence of his own. … Thus we have entered a new Middle Ages. By a general act of will freedom of thought has been put out of function, because many give up thinking as free individuals, and are guided by the collective to which they belong. … With the sacrifice of independence of thought we have—and how could it be otherwise—lost faith in truth. Our intellectual-emotional life is disorganized. *The overorganization of our public affairs culminates in the organization of thoughtlessness* [emphasis added].

He sees industrial society characterized not only by lack of freedom but also by "overeffort" *(Überanstrengung)*. "For two or three centuries many individuals have lived only as *working* beings and not as *human* beings." The human substance is stunted and in the upbringing of children by such stunted parents, an essential factor for their human development is lacking. "Later on, himself subjected to overoccupation, the adult person succumbs more and more to the need for superficial distraction. … *Absolute passivity, diverting attention from and forgetting of oneself are a physical need for him"* (emphasis added). As a consequence Schweitzer pleads for reduction of work and against overconsumption and luxury.

Schweitzer, the Protestant theologian, insists, as does Eckhart, the Dominican monk, that Man's task is not to retire into an atmosphere of spiritual egotism, remote from the affairs of the world, but to lead an active life in which one tries to contribute to the spiritual perfection of society. "If among modern individuals there are so few whose human and ethical sentiments are intact, not the least reason is the fact that they sacrifice constantly their personal morality on the altar of the fatherland, *instead of*

being in constant living interchange with the collective and of giving it the power which drives the collective to its perfection" (emphasis added).

He concludes that the present cultural and social structure drives toward a catastrophe, from which only a new Renaissance "much greater than the old one will arise"; that we must renew ourselves in a new belief and attitude, unless we want to perish. "Essential in this Renaissance will be the principle of activity, which rational thinking gives into our hands, the only rational and pragmatic principle of the historical development produced by Man. … I have confidence in my faith *that this revolution will occur if we decide to become thinking human beings"* (emphasis added).

It is probably because Schweitzer was a theologian and is best known, at least philosophically, for his concept of "reverence for life" as the basis of ethics that people have generally ignored that he was one of the most radical critics of industrial society, debunking its myth of progress and general happiness. He recognized the decay of human society and the world through the practice of industrialized life; at the beginning of this century he already saw the weakness and dependency of the people, the destructive effect of obsessional work, the need for less work and less consumption. He postulated the necessity for a Renaissance of collective life that would be organized by the spirit of solidarity and reverence for life.

This presentation of Schweitzer's thought should not be concluded without pointing to the fact that Schweitzer, in contrast to the metaphysical optimism of Christianity, was a metaphysical skeptic. This is one of the reasons he was strongly attracted by Buddhist thought, in which life has no meaning that is given and guaranteed by a supreme being. He came to this conclusion: "If one takes the world as it is, it is impossible to endow it with meaning in which the aims and goals of Man and of Mankind make sense." The only meaningful way of life is activity in the world; not activity in general but the activity of giving and caring for fellow creatures. Schweitzer gave this answer in his writing and by living it.

There is a remarkable kinship in the ideas of the Buddha, Eckhart, Marx, and Schweitzer: their radical demand for giving up the having orientation; their insistence on complete independence; their metaphysical skepticism; their godless religiosity,[30] and their demand for social activity in the spirit of care and human solidarity. However, these teachers are sometimes unconscious of these elements. For instance, Eckhart is usually unconscious of his non-theism; Marx, of his religiosity. The matter of

interpretation, especially of Eckhart and Marx, is so complex that it is impossible to give an adequate presentation of the non-theistic religion of caring activism that makes these teachers the founders of a new religiosity fitting the necessities of new Man. In a sequel to this volume I hope to analyze the ideas of these teachers.

Even authors whom one cannot call radical humanists, since they hardly transcend the transpersonal, mechanistic attitude of our age (such as the authors of the two reports commissioned by the Club of Rome), do not fail to see that a radical inner human change is the only alternative to economic catastrophe. Mesarovic and Pestel demand a "new world consciousness … a new ethic in the use of material resources … a new attitude toward nature, based on harmony rather than on conquest … a sense of identification with future generations. … For the first time in Man's life on earth, he is being asked to refrain from doing what he can do; he is being asked to restrain his economic and technological advancement, or at least to direct it differently from before; he is being asked by all the future generations of the earth to share his good fortune with the unfortunate—not in a spirit of charity but in a spirit of necessity. He is being asked to concentrate now on the organic growth of the total world system. Can he, in good conscience, say no?" They conclude that without these fundamental human changes, "*Homo sapiens* is as good as doomed."

The study has some shortcomings—to me the most outstanding one being that it does not consider the political, social, and psychological factors that stand in the way of any change. To indicate the trend of necessary changes in general is useless until it is followed up by a serious attempt to consider the real obstacles that impede all their suggestions. (It is to be hoped that the Club of Rome comes to grips with the problem of those social and political changes that are the preconditions for attaining the general goals.) Nevertheless the fact remains that these authors have attempted for the first time to show the economic needs and resources of the whole world, and that, as I wrote in the Introduction, for the first time a demand is made for an ethical change, not as a consequence of ethical beliefs but as the rational consequence of economic analysis.

Within the past few years, a considerable number of books in the United States and in Germany have raised the same demand: to subordinate economy to the needs of the people, first for our sheer survival, second for our well-being. (I have read or examined about thirty-five such books, but

the number available is at least twice that.) Most of these authors agree that material increase of consumption does not necessarily mean increase in well-being; that a characterological and spiritual change must go together with the necessary social changes; that unless we stop wasting our natural resources and destroying the ecological conditions for human survival, catastrophe within a hundred years is foreseeable. I mention here only a few of the outstanding representatives of this new humanistic economy.

The economist E. F. Schumacher shows in his book *Small Is Beautiful* that our failures are the result of our successes, and that our techniques must be subordinated to our real human needs. "Economy as a content of life is a deadly illness," he writes, "because infinite growth does not fit into a finite world. That economy should *not* be the content of life has been told to mankind by all its great teachers; that it *cannot* be is evident today. If one wants to describe the deadly illness in more detail, one can say that it is similar to an addiction, like alcoholism or drug addiction. It does not matter too much whether this addiction appears in a more egotistical or more altruistic form, whether it seeks its satisfaction only in a crude materialistic way or also in an artistically, culturally, or scientifically refined way. Poison is poison, even if wrapped in silver paper. … If spiritual culture, the culture of the inner Man, is neglected, then selfishness remains the dominating power in Man and a system of selfishness, like capitalism, fits this orientation better than a system of love for one's fellow beings."

Schumacher has translated his principles by devising minimachines that are adapted to the needs of non-industrialized countries. It is especially noteworthy that his books are more popular every year—and not by a big advertising campaign but by the word-of-mouth propaganda of his readers.

Paul Ehrlich and Anne Ehrlich are two American authors whose thinking is similar to Schumacher's. In their *Population, Resources, Environment: Issues in Human Ecology* they present the following conclusions about "the present world situation":

1. Considering present technology and patterns of behavior our planet is grossly overpopulated now.
2. The large absolute number of people and the rate of population growth are major hindrances to solving human problems.
3. The limits of human capability to produce food by conventional means have very nearly been reached. Problems of supply and distribution

already have resulted in roughly half of humanity being undernourished or malnourished. Some 10-20 million people are starving to death annually now.

4. Attempts to increase food production further will tend to accelerate the deterioration of our environment, which in turn will, eventually *reduce* the capacity of the earth to produce food. It is not clear whether environmental decay has now gone so far as to be essentially irreversible; it is possible that the capacity of the planet to support human life has been permanently impaired. Such technological "successes" as automobiles, pesticides, and inorganic nitrogen fertilizers are major causes of environmental deterioration.
5. There is reason to believe that population growth increases the probability of a lethal worldwide plague and of a thermonuclear war. Either could provide an undesirable "death rate solution" to the population problem; each is potentially capable of destroying civilization and even of driving *Homo sapiens* to extinction.
6. There is no technological panacea for the complex of problems composing the population-food-environment crisis, although technology properly applied in such areas as pollution abatement, communications, and fertility control can provide massive assistance. *The basic solutions involve dramatic and rapid changes in human attitudes,* especially those relating to reproductive behavior, economic growth, technology, the environment, and conflict resolution. [Emphasis added.]

E. Eppler's *Ende oder Wende* (End or change) is another recent work that bears mention. Eppler's ideas are similar to Schumacher's, though less radical, and his position is perhaps especially interesting because he is the leader of the Social Democratic party in Baden-Württemberg and a convinced Protestant. Two books I wrote are of the same orientation, *The Sane Society* and *The Revolution of Hope*.

Even among the Soviet bloc writers, where the idea of the restriction of production has always been taboo, voices are beginning to suggest that consideration be given to an economy without growth. W. Harich, a dissident Marxist in the German Democratic Republic, proposes a static, worldwide economic balance, which alone can guarantee equality and avert the danger of irreparable damage to the biosphere. Also, in 1972 some of

the most outstanding natural scientists, economists, and geographers in the Soviet Union met to discuss “Man and His Environment.” On their agenda were the results of the Club of Rome studies, which they considered in a sympathetic and respectful spirit, pointing to the considerable merits of the studies, even though not agreeing with them. (See “Technologie und Politik” in the Bibliography, for a report of this meeting.)

The most important contemporary anthropological and historical expression of the humanism that is common to these various attempts at humanist social reconstruction is to be found in L. Mumford’s *The Pentagon of Power* and in all his previous books.

VIII.
Conditions for Human Change and the Features of the New Man

ASSUMING THE PREMISE IS RIGHT—that only a fundamental change in human character from a preponderance of the having mode to a predominantly being mode of existence can save us from a psychologic and economic catastrophe—the question arises: Is large-scale characterological change possible, and if so, how can it be brought about?

I suggest that human character *can* change if these conditions exist:

1. We are suffering and are aware that we are.
2. We recognize the origin of our ill-being.
3. We recognize that there is a way of overcoming our ill-being.
4. We accept that in order to overcome our ill-being we must follow certain norms for living and change our present practice of life.

These four points correspond to the Four Noble Truths that form the basis of the Buddha's teaching dealing with the general condition of human existence, though not with cases of human ill-being due to specific individual or social circumstances.

The same principle of change that characterizes the methods of the Buddha also underlies Marx's idea of salvation. In order to understand this it is necessary to be aware that for Marx, as he himself said, communism was not a final goal, but a step in the historical development that was to liberate human beings from those socioeconomic and political conditions that make people inhuman—prisoners of things, machines, and their own greed.

Marx's first step was to show the working class of his time, the most alienated and miserable class, *that* they suffered. He tried to destroy the illusions that tended to cover the workers' awareness of their misery. His second step was to show the *causes* of this suffering, which he points out

are in the nature of capitalism and the character of greed and avarice and dependence that the capitalistic system produces. This analysis of the causes of the workers' suffering (but not *only* theirs) contributed the main thrust of Marx's work, the analysis of capitalistic economy.

His third step was to demonstrate that the suffering could be removed if the conditions for suffering were removed. In the fourth step he showed the new practice of life, the new social system that would be free of the suffering that the old system, of necessity, had to produce.

Freud's method of healing was essentially similar. Patients consulted Freud because they suffered and they were aware *that* they suffered. But they were usually not aware *what* they suffered from. The psychoanalyst's usual first task is to help patients give up their illusions about their suffering and learn what their ill-being really consists of. The diagnosis of the nature of individual or societal ill-being is a matter of interpretation, and various interpreters can differ. The patients' own picture of what they suffer from is usually the least reliable datum for a diagnosis. The essence of the psychoanalytic process is to help make patients aware of the *causes* of their ill-being.

As a consequence of such knowledge, patients can arrive at the next step: the insight that their ill-being can be cured, provided its causes are done away with. In Freud's view this meant to lift the repression of certain infantile events. Traditional psychoanalysis seems essentially not to agree on the need for the fourth point, however. Many psychoanalysts seem to think that, by itself, insight into the repressed has a curative effect. Indeed, this is often the case, especially when the patient suffers from circumscribed symptoms, such as hysterical or obsessional symptoms. But I do not believe anything lasting can be achieved by persons who suffer from a general ill-being and for whom a change in character is necessary, *unless they change their practice of life in accordance with the change in character they want to achieve*. For instance, one can analyze the dependency of individuals until doomsday, but all the insights gained will accomplish nothing while they stay in the same practical situations they were living in before arriving at these insights. To give a simple example: a woman whose suffering is rooted in her dependency on her father, even though she has insight into deeper causes of the dependency, will not really change unless she changes her practice of life, for instance separates from her father, does not accept

his favors, takes the risk and pain that these practical steps toward independence imply. *Insight separated from practice remains ineffective.*

The New Man

The function of the new society is to encourage the emergence of a new Man, beings whose character structure will exhibit the following qualities:

Willingness to give up all forms of having, in order to fully *be.*

- Security, sense of identity, and confidence based on faith in what one is, on one's need for relatedness, interest, love, solidarity with the world around one, instead of on one's desire to have, to possess, to control the world, and thus become the slave of one's possessions.
- Acceptance of the fact that nobody and nothing outside oneself give meaning to life, but that this radical independence and no-thingness can become the condition for the fullest activity devoted to caring and sharing.
- Being fully present where one is.
- Joy that comes from giving and sharing, not from hoarding and exploiting.
- Love and respect for life in all its manifestations, in the knowledge that not things, power, all that is dead, but life and everything that pertains to its growth are sacred.
- Trying to reduce greed, hate, and illusions as much as one is capable.
- Living without worshiping idols and without illusions, because one has reached a state that does not require illusions.
- Developing one's capacity for love, together with one's capacity for critical, unsentimental thought.
- Shedding one's narcissism and accepting the tragic limitations inherent in human existence.
- Making the full growth of oneself and of one's fellow beings the supreme goal of living.
- Knowing that to reach this goal, discipline and respect for reality are necessary.
- Knowing, also, that no growth is healthy that does not occur in a structure, but knowing, too, the difference between structure as an

attribute of life and “order” as an attribute of no-life, of the dead.

- Developing one’s imagination, not as an escape from intolerable circumstances but as the anticipation of real possibilities, as a means to do away with intolerable circumstances.
- Not deceiving others, but also not being deceived by others; one may be called innocent, but not naive.
- Knowing oneself, not only the self one knows, but also the self one does not know—even though one has a slumbering knowledge of what one does not know.
- Sensing one’s oneness with all life, hence giving up the aim of conquering nature, subduing it, exploiting it, raping it, destroying it, but trying, rather, to understand and cooperate with nature.
- Freedom that is not arbitrariness but the possibility to be oneself, not as a bundle of greedy desires, but as a delicately balanced structure that at any moment is confronted with the alternative of growth or decay, life or death.
- Knowing that evil and destructiveness are necessary consequences of failure to grow.
- Knowing that only a few have reached perfection in all these qualities, but being without the ambition to “reach the goal,” in the knowledge that such ambition is only another form of greed, of having.
- Happiness in the process of ever-growing aliveness, whatever the furthest point is that fate permits one to reach, for living as fully as one can is so satisfactory that the concern for what one might or might not attain has little chance to develop.

To suggest what people living in contemporary cybernetic, bureaucratic industrialism—whether in its “capitalist” or “socialist” version—could do to break through the having form of existence and to increase the being sector is not within the scope of this book. In fact, it would require a book by itself, one that might appropriately be titled “The Art of Being.” But many books have been published in recent years about the road to well-being, some helpful, and many others made harmful by their fraudulence, exploiting the new market that caters to people’s wish to escape their malaise. Some valuable books that might be helpful to anyone with a serious interest in the problem of achieving well-being are listed in the Bibliography.

IX.
Features of the New Society

A New Science of Man

THE FIRST REQUIREMENT IN THE possible creation of the new society is to be aware of the almost insurmountable difficulties that such an attempt must face. The dim awareness of this difficulty is probably one of the main reasons that so little effort is made to make the necessary changes. Many think: "Why strive for the impossible? Let us rather act as if the course we are steering will lead us to the place of safety and happiness that our maps indicate." Those who unconsciously despair yet put on the mask of optimism are not necessarily wise. But those who have not given up hope can succeed only if they are hardheaded realists, shed all illusions, and fully appreciate the difficulties. This sobriety marks the distinction between *awake* and *dreaming* "utopians."

To mention only a few of the difficulties the construction of the new society has to solve:

- It would have to solve the problem of how to continue the industrial mode of production without total centralization, i.e., without ending up in fascism of the old-fashioned type or, more likely, technological "fascism with a smiling face."
- It would have to combine overall planning with a high degree of decentralization, giving up the "free-market economy," that has become largely a fiction.
- It would have to give up the goal of unlimited growth for selective growth, without running the risk of economic disaster.
- It would have to create work conditions and a general spirit in which not material gain but other, psychic satisfactions are effective motivations.

- It would have to further scientific progress and, at the same time, prevent this progress from becoming a danger to the human race by its practical application.
- It would have to create conditions under which people experience well-being and joy, not the satisfaction of the maximum-pleasure drive.
- It would have to give basic security to individuals without making them dependent on a bureaucracy to feed them.
- It must restore possibilities for "individual initiative" in living, rather than in business (where it hardly exists any more anyway).

As in the development of technique some difficulties seemed insurmountable, so the difficulties listed above seem insurmountable now. But the difficulties of technique were not insurmountable because a new science had been established that proclaimed the principle of observation and knowledge of nature as conditions for controlling it (Francis Bacon: *Novum Organum*, 1620). This new science of the seventeenth century has attracted the most brilliant minds in the industrialized countries up to this day, and it led to the fulfillment of the technical Utopias the human mind had been dreaming of.

But today, roughly three and a half centuries later, we need an entirely different new science. We need a Humanistic Science of Man as the basis for the Applied Science and Art of Social Reconstruction.

Technical Utopias—flying, for example—have been achieved by the new science of nature. The *human Utopia* of the Messianic Time—a united new humankind living in solidarity and peace, free from economic determination and from war and class struggle—can be achieved, provided we spend the same energy, intelligence, and enthusiasm on the realization of the human Utopia as we have spent on the realization of our technical Utopias. One cannot construct submarines by reading Jules Verne; one cannot construct a humanist society by reading the prophets.

Whether such a change from the supremacy of natural science to a new social science will take place, nobody can tell. If it does, we might still have a chance for survival, but whether it will depends on one factor: how many brilliant, learned, disciplined, and caring men and women are attracted by the new challenge to the human mind, and by the fact that this time *the goal is not control over nature but control over technique and over irrational*

social forces and institutions that threaten the survival of Western society, if not of the human race.

It is my conviction that our future depends on whether, given awareness of the present crisis, the best minds will mobilize to devote themselves to the new humanistic science of Man. For nothing short of their concerted effort will help to solve the problems already mentioned here, and to achieve the goals discussed below.

Blueprints with such general aims as "socialization of the means of production" have turned out to be socialist and communist shibboleths mainly covering up the absence of socialism. "Dictatorship of the proletariat" or of an "intellectual elite" is no less nebulous and misleading than the concept of the "free market economy" or, for that matter, of the "free" nations. Earlier socialists and communists, from Marx to Lenin, had no concrete plans for a socialist or communist society; this was the great weakness of socialism.

New social forms that will be the basis of being will not arise without many designs, models, studies, and experiments that *begin to bridge the gap between what is necessary and what is possible*. This will eventually amount to large-scale, long-run planning and to short-term proposals for first steps. The problem is the will and the humanist spirit of those who work on them; besides, when people can see a vision and simultaneously recognize what can be done step by step in a concrete way to achieve it, they will begin to feel encouragement and enthusiasm instead of fright.

If the economic and political spheres of society are to be subordinated to human development, *the model of the new society must be determined by the requirements of the unalienated, being-oriented individual.* This means that human beings shall neither live in inhuman poverty—still the main problem of the majority of people—nor be forced—as are the affluent of the industrial world—to be a *Homo consumens by* the inherent laws of capitalist production, which demand continuous growth of production and, hence, enforce growing consumption. If human beings are ever to become free and to cease feeding industry by pathological consumption, a radical change in the economic system is necessary: *we must put an end to the present situation where a healthy economy is possible only at the price of unhealthy human beings.* The task is to construct a healthy economy for healthy people.

- *The first crucial step toward this goal is that production shall be directed for the sake of "sane consumption."*

The traditional formula "Production for *use* instead of for *profit"* is insufficient because it does not qualify what kind of use is referred to: healthy or pathological. At this point a most difficult practical question arises: Who is to determine which needs are healthy and which are pathogenic? Of one thing we can be certain: to force citizens to consume what the state decides is best—even if it is the best—is out of the question. Bureaucratic control that would forcibly block consumption would only make people all the more consumption hungry. Sane consumption can take place only if an ever-increasing number of people *want* to change their consumption patterns and their lifestyles. And this is possible only if people are offered a type of consumption that is more attractive than the one they are used to. This cannot happen overnight or by decree, but will require a slow educational process, and in this the government must play an important role.

The function of the state is to establish norms for healthy consumption, as against pathological and indifferent consumption. In principle, such norms can be established. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration offers a good example; it determines which foods and which drugs are harmful, basing its determination on the expert opinion of scientists in various fields, often after prolonged experimentation. In similar fashion, the value of other commodities and services can be determined by a panel of psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, theologians, and representatives of various social and consumer groups.

But the examination of what is life-furthering and what is life-damaging requires a depth of research that is incomparably greater than that necessary for resolving the problems of the FDA. Basic research on the nature of needs that has hardly been touched will have to be done by the new science of Man. We will need to determine which needs originate in our organism; which are the result of cultural progress; which are expressions of the individual's growth; which are synthetic, forced upon the individual by industry; which "activate" and which "passivate"; which are rooted in pathology and which in psychical health.

In contrast to the existing FDA, the decisions of the new humanist body of experts would not be implemented by force, but would serve only

as guidelines, to be submitted to the citizens for discussion. We have already become very much aware of the problem of healthful and unhealthful food; the results of the experts' investigations will help to increase society's recognition of all other sane and pathological needs. People would see that most consumption engenders passivity; that the need for speed and newness, which can only be satisfied by consumerism, reflects restlessness, the inner flight from oneself; they would become aware that looking for the next thing to do or the newest gadget to use is only a means of protecting oneself from being close to oneself or to another person.

The government can greatly facilitate this educational process by subsidizing the production of desirable commodities and services, until these can be profitably produced. A large educational campaign in favor of sane consumption would have to accompany these efforts. It is to be expected that a *concerted effort to stimulate the appetite for sane consumption is likely to change the pattern of consumption.* Even if the brainwashing advertising methods that industry now uses are avoided—and this is an essential condition—it does not seem unreasonable to expect this effort to have an effect that is not too far behind that of industrial propaganda.

A standard objection to the whole program of selective consumption (and production) according to the principle of "What furthers well-being?" is that in the free market economy the consumers get precisely what they want, and hence there is no need for "selective" production. This argument is based on the assumption that consumers want what is good for them, which is, of course, blatantly untrue (in the case of drugs, or perhaps even cigarettes, nobody would use this argument). The important fact that the argument plainly ignores is that the wishes of the consumer are manufactured by the producer. In spite of competing brands, the overall effect of advertising is to stimulate the craving for consumption. All firms help each other in this basic influence via their advertising; the buyer exercises only secondarily the doubtful privilege of choosing between several competing brands. One of the standard examples offered by those who argue that the consumers' wishes are all-powerful is the failure of the Ford company's "Edsel." But the Edsel's lack of success does not alter the fact that even the advertising propaganda for it was *propaganda to buy automobiles*—from which all brands profited, except the unfortunate Edsel.

Furthermore, industry influences taste by not producing commodities that would be more healthful to human beings but less profitable to industry.

Sane consumption is possible only if we can drastically curb the right of the stockholders and management of big enterprises to determine their production solely on the basis of profit and expansion.

Such changes could be effected by law without altering the constitutions of Western democracies (we already have many laws that restrict property rights in the interest of the public welfare). What matters is the power to direct production, not ownership of capital. In the long run, the tastes of the consumers will decide what is to be produced, once the suggestive power of advertising is ended. Either the existing enterprises will have to convert their facilities in order to satisfy the new demands, or where that is not possible, the government must spend the capital necessary for the production of new products and services that are wanted.

All these changes can only be made gradually, and with the consent of the majority of the population. But they amount to a new form of economic system, one that is as different from present-day capitalism as it is from the Soviet centralized state capitalism and from the Swedish total welfare bureaucracy.

Obviously, from the very beginning the big corporations will use their tremendous power to try to fight such changes. Only the citizens' overwhelming desire for sane consumption could break the corporations' resistance.

One effective way that citizens can demonstrate the *power of the consumer is* to build a militant consumer movement that will use the threat of "consumer strikes" as a weapon. Assume, for instance, that 20 percent of the American car-consuming population were to decide not to buy private automobiles any more, because they believed that, in comparison with excellent public transportation, the private automobile is economically wasteful, ecologically poisonous, and psychologically damaging—a drug that creates an artificial feeling of power, increases envy, and helps one to run away from oneself. While only an economist could determine how great an economic threat it would be to the automobile industry—and, of course, to the oil companies—clearly if such a consumer strike were to happen, a national economy centered around automobile production would be in serious trouble. Of course, nobody wants the American economy to be in serious trouble, but such a threat, if it can be made credible (stop using cars

for one month, for instance), would give consumers a powerful leverage to induce changes in the whole system of production.

The great advantages of consumer strikes are that they do not require government action, that they are difficult to combat (unless the government were to take the step of forcing citizens to buy what they do not want to buy), and that there would be no need to wait for the accord of 51 percent of the citizens to bring enforcement by government measures. For, indeed, a 20 percent minority could be extremely effective in inducing change. Consumer strikes could cut through political lines and slogans; conservative as well as liberal and "left" humanists could participate, since one motivation would unite them all: the desire for sane and humane consumption. As the first step to calling off a consumer strike, the radical humanist consumer movement leaders would negotiate with big industry (and with the government) for the demanded changes. Their method would be basically the same as that used in negotiations to avert or end a workers' strike.

The problem in all this lies in making the consumers aware of (1) their partly unconscious protest against consumerism and (2) their potential power, once the humanist-minded consumers are organized. Such a consumers' movement would be a manifestation of genuine democracy: the individuals would express themselves directly and try to change the course of social development in an active and non-alienated fashion. And all this would be based on personal experience, not on political slogans.

But even an effective consumers' movement will not suffice as long as the power of the big corporations remains as great as it is now. For even the remnant of democracy that still exists is doomed to yield to technocratic fascism, to a society of well-fed, unthinking robots—the very type of society that was so much feared under the name of "communism"—unless the giant corporations' big hold on the government (which becomes stronger daily) and on the population (via thought control through brainwashing) is broken. The United States has a tradition of curbing the power of giant enterprises, expressed in its antitrust laws. A powerful public sentiment could move that the spirit of these laws be applied to the existing corporate superpowers, so that those superpowers would be broken up into smaller units.

- *To achieve a society based on being, all people must actively participate in their economic function and as citizens. Hence, our liberation from the having mode of existence is possible only through the full realization of industrial and political participatory democracy.*

This demand is shared by most radical humanists.

Industrial democracy implies that each member of a large industrial or other organization plays an active role in the life of the organization; that each is fully informed and participates in decision-making, starting at the level of the individual's own work process, health and safety measures (this has already been successfully tried by a few Swedish and American enterprises) and eventually participating in decision-making at higher, general policy levels of the enterprise. It is essential that the workers and employees represent themselves, and not representatives of trade unions. Industrial democracy means also that the enterprise is not only an economic and technical institution, but a social institution in whose life and manner of functioning every member becomes active and, therefore, interested.

The same principles apply to the implementation of *political democracy.* Democracy can resist the authoritarian threat if it is transformed from a passive "spectator democracy" into an active "participatory democracy"—in which the affairs of the community are as close and as important to the individual citizens as their private affairs or, better, in which the well-being of the community becomes each citizen's private concern. By participating in the community, people find life becomes more interesting and stimulating. Indeed, a true political democracy can be defined as one in which life is just that, *interesting.* By its very nature such participatory democracy—in contrast to the "people's democracies" or "centralistic democracy"—is unbureaucratic and creates a climate that virtually excludes the emergence of demagogues.

Devising the methods for participatory democracy is probably far more difficult than was the elaboration of a democratic constitution in the eighteenth century. Many competent people will be required to make a gargantuan effort to devise the new principles and the implementing methods for building the participatory democracy. As just one of many possible suggestions for achieving this end, I should like to restate one I made more than twenty years ago in *The Sane Society:* that hundreds of thousands of face-to-face groups (of about five hundred members each) be

created, to constitute themselves permanent bodies of deliberation and decision-making with regard to basic problems in the fields of economics, foreign policy, health, education, and the means to well-being. These groups would be given all pertinent information (the nature of this information is described later), would discuss this information (without the presence of outside influences), and would vote on the issues (and, given our current technological methods, all their votes could be collected within a day). The totality of these groups would form a "Lower House," whose decisions, along with those of other political organs, would have crucial influence on legislation.

"Why make these elaborate plans," it will be asked, "when opinion polls can perform the task of eliciting the whole population's opinion in an equally short time?" This objection touches upon one of the most problematical aspects of the expression of opinion. What is the "opinion" on which the polls are based but the views a person has without the benefit of adequate information, critical reflection, and discussion? Furthermore, the people polled know that their "opinions" do not count and have no effect. Such opinions only constitute people's conscious ideas at a given moment; they tell us nothing about the underlying trends that might lead to the opposite opinions if circumstances were to change. Similarly, the voters in a political election know that once they have voted for a candidate, they have no further real influence on the course of events. In some respects, voting in a political election is even worse than the opinion polls because of the dulling of thinking by semi hypnotic techniques. Elections become an exciting soap opera, with the hopes and aspirations of the candidates—not political issues—at stake. The voters can even participate in the drama by giving their votes to the candidate with whom they side. Even though a large part of the population refuses to make this gesture, most people are fascinated by these modern Roman spectacles in which politicians, rather than gladiators, fight in the arena.

At least two requirements are involved in the formation of a genuine conviction: *adequate information and the knowledge that one's decision has an effect.* Opinions formed by the powerless onlooker do not express his or her conviction, but are a game, analogous to expressing a preference for one brand of cigarette over another. For these reasons the opinions expressed in polls and in elections constitute the worst, rather than the best, level of human judgment. This fact is confirmed by just two examples of people's

best judgments, i.e., *people's decisions are far superior to the level of their political decisions (a)* in their private affairs (especially in business, as Joseph Schumpeter has so clearly shown) and *(b)* when they are members of juries. Juries are comprised of average citizens, who have to make decisions in cases that are often very intricate and difficult to understand. But the panel members get all pertinent information, have the chance for extended discussion, and know that their judgment decides the life and happiness of the persons they are mandated to judge. The result is that, by and large, their decisions show a great deal of insight and objectivity. In contrast, uninformed, half-hypnotized, and powerless people cannot express serious convictions. Without information, deliberation, and the power to make one's decision effective, democratically expressed opinion is hardly more than the applause at a sports event.

- *Active participation in political life requires maximum decentralization throughout industry and politics.*

Because of the immanent logic of existing capitalism, enterprises and government grow ever larger and eventually become giants that are administered centrally from the top through a bureaucratic machine. One of the requisites of a humanistic society is that this process of centralization should stop and large-scale decentralization take place. There are several reasons for this. If a society is transformed into what Mumford has called a "megamachine" (that is, if the whole of a society, including its people, is like a large, centrally directed machine), fascism is almost unavoidable in the long run because (a) people become sheep, lose their faculty for critical thinking, feel powerless, are passive, and necessarily long for a leader who "knows" what to do—and everything else *they* do not know, and (b) the "megamachine" can be put in operation by anybody with access to it, simply by pushing the proper buttons. The megamachine, like an automobile, essentially runs itself: i.e., the person behind the wheel of the car has only to push the right buttons, manage the steering and the braking, and pay some attention to a few other similarly simple details; what in a car or other machine are its many wheels, in the megamachine are the many levels of bureaucratic administration. Even a person of mediocre intelligence and ability can easily run a state once he or she is in the seat of power.

Government functions must not be delegated to states—which are themselves huge conglomerates—but to relatively small districts where people can still know and judge each other and, hence, can actively participate in the administration of their own community affairs. Decentralization in industry must give more power to small sections within a given enterprise and break up the giant corporations into small entities.

- *Active and responsible participation further requires that humanistic management replace bureaucratic management.*

Most people still believe that every kind of large-scale administration must necessarily be "bureaucratic," i.e., an alienated form of administration. And most people are unaware of how deadening the bureaucratic spirit is and how it pervades all spheres of life, even where it seems not to be obvious, as in physician—patient and husband—wife relationships. The bureaucratic method can be defined as one that *(a)* administers human beings as if they were things and *(b)* administers things in quantitative rather than qualitative terms, in order to make quantification and control easier and cheaper. The bureaucratic method is governed by statistical data: the bureaucrats base their decisions on fixed rules arrived at from statistical data, rather than on *response to the living beings who stand before them;* they decide issues according to what is statistically most likely to be the case, at the risk of hurting the 5 or 10 percent of those who do not fit into that pattern. Bureaucrats fear personal responsibility and seek refuge behind their rules; their security and pride lie in their loyalty to rules, not in their loyalty to the laws of the human heart.

Eichmann was an extreme example of a bureaucrat. Eichmann did not send the hundreds of thousands of Jews to their deaths because he hated them; he neither hated nor loved anyone. Eichmann "did his duty": he was dutiful when he sent the Jews to their deaths; he was just as dutiful when he was charged simply with expediting their emigration from Germany. All that mattered to him was to obey the rules; he felt guilty only when he had disobeyed them. He stated (damaging his own case by this) that he felt guilty on only two counts: for having played truant as a child, and for having disobeyed orders to take shelter during an air raid. This does not imply that there was not an element of sadism in Eichmann and in many other bureaucrats, i.e., the satisfaction of controlling other living beings.

But this sadistic streak is only secondary to the primary elements in bureaucrats: their lack of human response and their worship of rules.

I am not saying that all bureaucrats are Eichmanns. In the first place, many human beings in bureaucratic positions are not bureaucrats in a characterological sense. In the second place, in many cases the bureaucratic attitude has not taken over the whole person and killed his or her human side. Yet there are many Eichmanns among the bureaucrats, and the only difference is that they have not had to destroy thousands of people. But when the bureaucrat in a hospital refuses to admit a critically sick person because the rules require that the patient be sent by a physician, that bureaucrat acts no differently than Eichmann did. Neither do the social workers who decide to let a client starve, rather than violate a certain rule in their bureaucratic code. This bureaucratic attitude exists not only among administrators; it lives among physicians, nurses, schoolteachers, professors —as well as in many husbands in relation to their wives and in many parents in relation to their children.

Once the living human being is reduced to a number, the true bureaucrats can commit acts of utter cruelty, not because they are driven by cruelty of a magnitude commensurate to their deeds, but because they feel no human bond to their subjects. While less vile than pure sadists, the bureaucrats are more dangerous, because in them there is not even a conflict between conscience and duty: their conscience is doing their duty; human beings as objects of empathy and compassion do not exist for them.

The old-fashioned bureaucrat, who was prone to be unfriendly, still exists in some old-established enterprises or in such large organizations as welfare departments, hospitals, and prisons, in which a single bureaucrat has considerable power over poor or otherwise powerless people. The bureaucrats in modern industry are not unfriendly and probably have little of the sadistic streak, even though they may get some pleasure from having power over people. But again, we find in them that bureaucratic allegiance to a thing—in their case, the *system:* they believe in *it.* The corporation is their home, and its rules are sacred because the rules are “rational.”

But neither the old nor the new bureaucrats can coexist in a system of participatory democracy, for the bureaucratic spirit is incompatible with the spirit of active participation by the individual. The new social scientists must devise plans for new forms of non-bureaucratic large-scale administration that is directed by response (that reflects “responsibility”) to

people and situations rather than by the mere application of rules. Non-bureaucratic administration is possible provided we take into account the potential spontaneity of response in the administrator and do not make a fetish of economizing.

Success in establishing a society of being depends on many other measures. In offering the following suggestions, I make no claim to originality; on the contrary, I am encouraged by the fact that almost all of these suggestions have been made in one form or another by humanist writers.[31]

- *All brainwashing methods in industrial and political advertising must be prohibited.*

These brainwashing methods are dangerous not only because they impel us to buy things that we neither need nor want, but because they lead us to choose political representatives we would neither need nor want *if* we were in full control of our minds. But we are *not* in full control of our minds because hypnoid methods are used to propagandize us. To combat this ever-increasing danger, *we must prohibit the use of all hypnoid forms of propaganda, for commodities as well as for politicians.*

The hypnoid methods used in advertising and political propaganda are a serious danger to mental health, specifically to clear and critical thinking and emotional independence. I have no doubt that thorough studies will show that the damage caused by drug addiction is only a fraction of the damage done by our methods of brainwashing, from subliminal suggestions to such semi hypnotic devices as constant repetition or the deflection of rational thought by the appeal to sexual lust (“I’m Linda, fly me!”). The bombardment with purely suggestive methods in advertising, and most of all in television commercials, is stultifying. This assault on reason and the sense of reality pursues the individual everywhere and daily at any time: during many hours of watching television, or when driving on a highway, or in the political propaganda of candidates, and so on. The particular effect of these suggestive methods is that they create an atmosphere of being half-awake, of believing and not believing, of losing one’s sense of reality.

Stopping the poison of mass suggestion will have a withdrawal effect on consumers that will be little different from the withdrawal symptoms drug addicts experience when they stop taking drugs.

- *The gap between the rich and the poor nations must be closed.*

There is little doubt that the continuation and further deepening of that gap will lead to catastrophe. The poor nations have ceased to accept the economic exploitation by the industrial world as a God-given fact. Even though the Soviet Union is still exploiting its own satellite states in the same colonialist manner, it uses and reinforces the protest of the colonial peoples as a political weapon against the West. The increase in oil prices was the beginning—and a symbol—of the colonial peoples' demand to end the system that requires them to sell raw materials cheap and buy industrial products dear. In the same way, the Vietnam war was a symbol of the beginning of the end of the colonial peoples' political and military domination by the West.

What will happen if nothing crucial is done to close the gap? Either epidemics will spread into the fortress of the white society or famines will drive the population of the poor nations into such despair that they, perhaps with the help of sympathizers from the industrial world, will commit acts of destruction, even use small nuclear or biological weapons, that will bring chaos within the white fortress.

This catastrophic possibility can be averted only if the conditions of hunger, starvation, and sickness are brought under control—and to do that, the help of the industrial nations is vitally necessary. The methods for such help must be free from all interests in profits and political advantages on the side of the rich countries; this means also that they must be free from the idea that the economic and political principles of capitalism are to be transferred to Africa and Asia. Obviously, *the* most efficient way for economic help to be given is a matter for economic experts to determine.

But only those who can qualify as true experts can serve this cause, individuals who have not only brilliant brains but humane hearts that impel them to seek the optimal solution. In order for these experts to be called in, and their recommendations to be followed, the having orientation must greatly weaken, and a sense of solidarity, of caring (not of pity) must emerge. Caring means caring not only for our fellow beings on this earth but also for our descendants. Indeed, nothing is more telling about our selfishness than that we go on plundering the raw materials of the earth, poisoning the earth, and preparing nuclear war. We hesitate not at all at leaving our own descendants this plundered earth as their heritage.

Will this inner transformation take place? No one knows. But one thing the world should know is that without it the clash between poor and rich nations will become unmanageable.

Many of the evils of *present-day capitalist and communist societies would disappear with the introduction of a guaranteed yearly income.**[32]***

The core of this idea is that all persons, regardless of whether they work or not, shall have the unconditional right not to starve and not to be without shelter. They shall receive not more than is basically required to sustain themselves—but neither shall they receive less. This right expresses a new concept for today, though a very old norm, demanded by Christianity and practiced in many "primitive" tribes, that human beings have an *unconditional right to live, regardless of whether they do their "duty to society.*" It is a right we guarantee to our pets, but not to our fellow beings.

The realm of personal freedom would be tremendously enlarged by such a law; no person who is economically dependent on another (e.g., on a parent, husband, boss) could any longer be forced to submit to the blackmail of starvation; gifted persons wanting to prepare for a different life could do so provided they were willing to make the sacrifice of living in a degree of poverty for a time. Modern welfare states have accepted this principle—almost … which actually means "not really." A bureaucracy still "administers" the people, still controls and humiliates them. But a guaranteed income would require no "proof" of need for any person to get a simple room and a minimum of food. Thus no bureaucracy would be needed to administer a welfare program with its inherent waste and its violations of human dignity.

The guaranteed yearly income would ensure real freedom and independence. For that reason, it is unacceptable to any system based on exploitation and control, particularly the various forms of dictatorship. It is characteristic of the Soviet system that even suggestions for the simplest forms of free goods (for example, free public transportation or free milk) have been consistently rejected. Free medical service is the exception, but only apparently so, since here the free service is in response to a clear condition: one must be sick to receive it.

Considering the present-day cost of running a large welfare bureaucracy, the cost of treating physical, especially psychosomatic, illnesses, criminality, and drug addiction (all of which are largely forms of protest against coercion and boredom), it seems likely that the cost of

providing any person who wanted it with a guaranteed annual income would be less than that of our present system of social welfare. The idea will appear unfeasible or dangerous to those who believe that “people are basically lazy by nature.” This cliché has no basis in fact, however; it is simply a slogan that serves as a rationalization for the resistance against surrendering the sense of power over those who are helpless.

- *Women must be liberated from patriarchal domination.*

The freedom of women from patriarchal domination is a fundamental factor in the humanization of society. The domination of women by men began only about six thousand years ago in various parts of the world when surplus in agriculture permitted the hiring and exploitation of workers, the organization of armies, and the building of powerful city-states.[33] Since then, not only Middle Eastern and European societies but most of the world’s cultures have been conquered by the “associated males” who subdued the women. This victory of the male over the female of the human species was based on the men’s economic power and the military machine they built.

The war between the sexes is as old as the war between the classes, but its forms are more complicated, since men have needed women not only as working beasts but also as mothers, lovers, solace-givers. The forms of the war between the sexes are often overt and brutal, more often hidden. Women yielded to superior force, but fought back with their own weapons, their chief one being ridicule of the men.

The subjugation of one half of the human race by the other has done, and still does, immense harm to both sexes: the men assume the characteristics of the victor, the women those of the victim. No relation between a man and a woman, even today, and even among those who consciously protest against male supremacy, is free from the curse either, among men, of feeling superior or, among women, of feeling inferior. (Freud, the unquestioning believer in male superiority, unfortunately assumed that women’s sense of powerlessness was due to their alleged regret that they have no penis, and that men were insecure because of their alleged universal “fear of castration.” What we are dealing with in this phenomenon are symptoms of the war between the sexes, not biological and anatomical differences as such.)

Many data show how much men's control over women resembles one group's control over other powerless populations. As an example, consider the similarity between the picture of the blacks in the American South a hundred years ago and that of women at that time, and even up to today. Blacks and women were compared to children; they were supposed to be emotional, naive, without a sense of reality, so that they were not to be trusted with making decisions; they were supposed to be irresponsible, but charming. (Freud added to the catalogue that women had a less developed conscience [superego] than men and were more narcissistic.)

The exercise of power over those who are weaker is the essence of existing patriarchy, as it is the essence of the domination of non-industrialized nations and of children and adolescents. The growing movement for women's liberation is of enormous significance because it is a threat to the principle of power on which contemporary society (capitalist and communist alike) lives—that is, if the women clearly mean by liberation that they do not want to share the men's power over other groups, such as the power over the colonial peoples. If the movement for the liberation of women can identify its own role and function as representative of "antipower," women will have a decisive influence in the battle for a new society.

Basic liberating changes have already been made. Perhaps a later historian will report that the most revolutionary event in the twentieth century was the beginning of women's liberation and the downfall of men's supremacy. But the fight for the liberation of women has only just begun, and men's resistance cannot be overestimated. Their whole relation to women (including their sexual relation) has been based on their alleged superiority, and they have already begun to feel quite uncomfortable and anxious vis-à-vis those women who refuse to accept the myth of male superiority.

Closely related to the women's liberation movement is the antiauthoritarian turn of the younger generations. This antiauthoritarianism had its peak in the late sixties; now, through a number of changes, many of the rebels against the "establishment" have essentially become "good" again. But the starch has nonetheless been washed out of the old worship of parental and other authorities, and it seems certain that the old "awe" of authority will not return.

Paralleling this emancipation from authority is the liberation from guilt about sex: sex certainly seems to have ceased being unspeakable and sinful. However people may differ in their opinions regarding the relative merits of the many facets of the sexual revolution, one thing is sure: sex no longer frightens people; it can no longer be used to develop a sense of guilt, and thereby to force submission.

- *A Supreme Cultural Council, charged with the task of advising the government, the politicians, and the citizens in all matters in which knowledge is necessary, should be established.*

The cultural council members would be representative of the intellectual and artistic elite of the country, men and women whose integrity was beyond doubt. They would determine the composition of the new, expanded form of the FDA and would select the people to be responsible for disseminating information.

There is a substantial consensus on who the outstanding representatives of various branches of culture are, and I believe it would be possible to find the right members for such a council. It is of decisive importance, of course, that this council should also represent those who are opposed to established views: for instance, the “radicals” and “revisionists” in economics, history, and sociology. The difficulty is not in *finding* the council members but in *choosing* them, for they cannot be elected by popular vote, nor should they be appointed by the government. Yet other ways of selecting them may be found. For instance, start with a nucleus of three or four persons and gradually enlarge the group to its full size of, say, fifty to a hundred persons. This cultural council should be amply financed so that it would be able to commission special studies of various problems.

- *A system of effective dissemination of effective information must also be established.*

Information is a crucial element in the formation of an effective democracy. Withholding information or falsifying it in the alleged interests of “national security” must be ended. But even without such illegitimate withholding of information, the problem remains that at present the amount of real and necessary information given to the average citizen is almost zero. And this

holds true not only for the average citizen. As has been shown abundantly, most elected representatives, members of government, leaders of the defense forces, and business leaders are badly informed and to a large extent misinformed by the falsehoods that various government agencies spread, and the news media repeat. Unfortunately, most of these same people, in turn, have at best a purely manipulative intelligence. They have little capacity to understand the forces operating beneath the surface and, hence, to make sound judgments about future developments, not to speak of their selfishness and dishonesty, of which we have heard enough. But even to be an honest and intelligent bureaucrat is not enough to solve the problems of a world-facing catastrophe.

With the exception of a few "great" newspapers, even the factual information on political, economic, and social data is extremely limited. The so-called great newspapers inform better, but they also misinform better: by not publishing all the news impartially; by slanting headlines, in addition to writing headlines that often do not conform with their accompanying text; by being partisan in their editorials, written under the cover of seemingly reasonable and moralizing language. In fact, the newspapers, the magazines, television, and radio produce a commodity: *news,* from the raw material of events. Only news is salable, and the news media determine which events are news, which are not. At the very best, information is ready-made, concerns only the surface of events, and barely gives the citizens an opportunity to penetrate through the surface and recognize the deeper causes of the events. As long as the sale of news is a business, newspapers and magazines can hardly be prevented from printing what sells (in various degrees of unscrupulousness) their publications and does not antagonize the advertisers.

The information problem must be solved in a different way if informed opinion and decision are to be possible. As an example of such a way I mention only one: that one of the first and most important functions of the Supreme Cultural Council would be to gather and disseminate all the information that would serve the needs of the whole population and, particularly, would serve as the basis for discussion among the face-to-face groups in our participatory democracy. This information should contain basic facts and basic alternatives in all areas in which political decisions take place. It is of special importance that in case of disagreement the minority opinion *and* the majority opinion would be published, and that this

information would be made available to every citizen and particularly to the face-to-face groups. The Supreme Cultural Council would be responsible for supervising the work of this new body of news reporters, and, of course, radio and television would have an important role in disseminating this kind of information.

- *Scientific research must be separated from application in industry and defense.*

While it would be hobbling of human development if one set any limits to the demand for knowledge, it would be extremely dangerous if practical use were made of all the results of scientific thinking. As has been emphasized by many observers, certain discoveries in genetics, in brain surgery, in psychodrugs, and in many other areas can and will be misused to the great damage of Man. This is unavoidable as long as industrial and military interests are free to make use of all new theoretical discoveries as they see fit. Profit and military expediency must cease to determine the application of scientific research. This will require a control board, whose permission would be necessary for the practical application of any new theoretical discovery. Needless to say, such a control board must be—legally and psychologically—completely independent of industry, the government, and the military. The Supreme Cultural Council would have the authority to appoint and supervise this control board.

While all the suggestions made in the foregoing pages will be difficult enough to realize, our difficulties become almost insurmountable with the addition of another necessary condition of a new society: *atomic disarmament.*

One of the sick elements in our economy is that it needs a large armament industry. Even today, the United States, the richest country in the world, must curtail its expenses for health, welfare, and education in order to carry the load of its defense budget. The cost of social experimentation cannot possibly be borne by a state that is making itself poor by the production of hardware that is useful only as a means of suicide. Furthermore, the spirit of individualism and activity cannot live in an atmosphere where the military bureaucracy, gaining in power every day, continues to further fear and subordination.

The New Society: Is There a Reasonable Chance?

Considering the power of the corporations, the apathy and powerlessness of the large mass of the population, the inadequacy of political leaders in almost all countries, the threat of nuclear war, the ecological dangers, not to speak of such phenomena as weather changes that alone could produce famines in large parts of the world, is *there a reasonable chance for salvation?* From the standpoint of a business deal, there is no such chance; no reasonable human beings would bet their fortunes when the odds represent only a 2 percent chance of winning, or make a large investment of capital in a business venture with the same poor chance of gain. But when it is a matter of life and death, "reasonable chance" must be translated into "real possibility," however small it may be.

Life is neither a game of chance nor a business deal, and we must seek elsewhere for an appreciation of the real possibilities for salvation: in the healing art of medicine, for example. If a sick person has even the barest chance for survival, no responsible physician will say, "Let's give up the effort," or will use only palliatives. On the contrary, everything conceivable is done to save the sick person's life. Certainly, a sick society cannot expect anything less.

Judging present-day society's chances for salvation from the standpoint of betting or business rather than from the standpoint of life is characteristic of the spirit of a business society. There is little wisdom in the currently fashionable technocratic view that there is nothing seriously wrong in keeping ourselves busy with work or fun, in not feeling, and that even *if* there is, perhaps technocratic fascism may not be so bad, after all. But this is wishful thinking. Technocratic fascism must necessarily lead to catastrophe. Dehumanized Man will become so mad that he will not be able to sustain a viable society in the long run, and in the short run will not be able to refrain from the suicidal use of nuclear or biological weapons.

Yet there are a few factors that can give us some encouragement. The first is that a growing number of people now recognize the truth that Mesarovic and Pestel, Ehrlich and Ehrlich, and others have stated: that *on purely economic grounds* a new ethic, a new attitude toward nature, human solidarity, and cooperation are necessary if the Western world is not to be wiped out. This appeal to reason, even aside from any emotional and ethical considerations, may mobilize the minds of not a few people; it should not

be taken lightly, even though, historically, nations have again and again acted against their vital interests and even against the drive for survival. They could do so because the people were persuaded by their leaders, that the choice between “to be or not to be” did not confront them. Had they recognized the truth, however, the normal neurophysiological reaction would have taken place: their awareness of vital threats would have mobilized appropriate defense action.

Another hopeful sign is the increasing display of dissatisfaction with our present social system. A growing number of people feel *la malaise du siècle:* they sense their depression; they are conscious of it, in spite of all kinds of efforts to repress it. They feel the unhappiness of their isolation and the emptiness of their “togetherness”; they feel their impotence, the meaninglessness of their lives. Many feel all this very clearly and consciously; others feel it less clearly, but are fully aware of it when someone else puts it into words.

So far in world history a life of empty pleasure was possible for only a small elite, and they remained essentially sane because they knew they had power and that they had to think and to act in order not to lose their power. Today, the empty life of consumption is that of the whole middle class, which economically and politically has no power and little personal responsibility. The major part of the Western world knows the benefits of the consumer type of happiness, and growing numbers of those who benefit from it are finding it wanting. They are beginning to discover that having much does not create well-being: traditional ethical teaching has been put to the test—and is being confirmed by experience.

Only in those who live without the benefits of middle-class luxury does the old illusion remain untouched: in the lower middle classes in the West and among the vast majority in the “socialist” countries. Indeed, the bourgeois hope for “happiness through consumption” is nowhere more alive than in the countries that have not yet fulfilled the bourgeois dream.

One of the gravest objections to the possibilities of overcoming greed and envy, namely that their strength is inherent in human nature, loses a good deal of its weight upon further examination. Greed and envy are so strong not because of their *inherent intensity* but because of the difficulty in resisting the public pressure to be a wolf with the wolves. Change the social climate, the values that are either approved or disapproved, and the change from selfishness to altruism will lose

Thus we arrive again at the premise that the being orientation is a strong potential in human nature. Only a minority is governed by the having mode, while another small minority is governed by the being mode. Either can become dominant, and which one does depends on the social structure. In a society oriented mainly toward being, the having tendencies are starved and the being mode is fed. In a society like ours, whose main orientation is toward having, the reverse occurs. But the being mode of existence is always already present—though repressed. No Saul becomes a Paul if he was not already a Paul before his conversion.

The change from having to being is actually a tipping of the scales, when in connection with social change the new is encouraged and the old discouraged. Besides, this is not a question of a new Man as different from the old as the sky is from the earth; it is a question of a change of direction. One step in the new direction will be followed by the next, and taken in the right direction, these steps mean everything.

Yet another encouraging aspect to consider is one that, paradoxically, concerns the degree of alienation that characterizes the majority of the population, including its leaders. As pointed out in the earlier discussion of the "marketing character," the greed to have and to hoard has been modified by the tendency to merely function well, to exchange oneself as a commodity who is—nothing. It is easier for the alienated, marketing character to change than it is for the hoarding character, which is frantically holding onto possessions, and particularly its ego.

A hundred years ago, when the major part of the population consisted of "independents," the greatest obstacle to change was the fear of and resistance to loss of property and economic independence. Marx lived at a time when the working class was the only large dependent class and, as Marx thought, the most alienated one. Today, the vast majority of the population is *dependent;* virtually all people who work are *employed* (according to the 1970 U.S. Census report, only 7.82 percent of the total working population over age sixteen is self-employed, i.e., "independent"); and—at least in the United States—it is the blue-collar workers who still maintain the traditional middle-class hoarding character, and who, consequently, are less open to change than is today's more alienated middle class.

All this has a most important political consequence: while socialism was striving for the liberation of all classes—i.e., striving for a classless

society—its immediate appeal was to the “working class,” i.e., the manual workers; today the working class is (in relative terms) even more of a minority than it was a hundred years ago. In order to gain power, the social democratic parties need to win the votes of many members of the middle class, and in order to achieve this goal, the socialist parties have had to cut back their program from one with a socialist vision to one offering liberal reforms. On the other hand, by identifying the working class as the lever of humanistic change, socialism necessarily antagonized the members of all other classes, who felt that their properties and privileges were going to be taken away by the workers.

Today, the appeal of the new society goes to all who suffer from alienation, who are employed, and whose property is not threatened. In other words, it concerns the majority of the population, not merely a minority. It does not threaten to take anybody’s property, and as far as income is concerned, it would raise the standard of living of those who are poor. High salaries for top executives would not have to be lowered, but if the system worked, they would not want to be symbols of times past.

Furthermore, the ideals of the new society cross all party lines: many conservatives have not lost their ethical and religious ideals (Eppler calls them “value conservatives”), and the same holds true of many liberals and leftists. Each political party exploits the voters by persuading them that it represents the true values of humanism. Yet behind all political parties are only two camps: *those who care and those who don’t care.* If all those in the camp that cares could rid themselves of party clichés and realize that they have the same goals, the possibility of change would seem to be considerably greater; especially so since most citizens have become less and less interested in party loyalty and party slogans. People today are yearning for human beings who have wisdom and convictions and the courage to act according to their convictions.

Given even these hopeful factors, however, the chances for necessary human and social changes remain slim. Our only hope lies in the energizing attraction of a new vision. To propose this or that reform that does not change the system is useless in the long run because it does not carry with it the impelling force of a strong motivation. The “utopian” goal is more realistic than the “realism” of today’s leaders. The realization of the new society and new Man is possible only if the old motivations of profit and power are replaced by new ones: being, sharing, understanding; if the

marketing character is replaced by the productive, loving character; if cybernetic religion is replaced by a new radical-humanistic spirit.

Indeed, for those who are not authentically rooted in theistic religion the crucial question is that of conversion to a humanistic "religiosity" without religion, without dogmas and institutions, a "religiosity" long prepared by the movement of non-theistic religiosity, from the Buddha to Marx. We are not confronted with the choice between selfish materialism and the acceptance of the Christian concept of God. Social life itself—in all its aspects in work, in leisure, in personal relations—will be the expression of the "religious" spirit, and no separate religion will be necessary. This demand for a new, non-theistic, non-institutionalized "religiosity" is not an attack on the existing religions. It does mean, however, that the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with the Roman bureaucracy, must convert *itself* to the spirit of the gospel. It does not mean that the "socialist countries" must be "desocialized," but that their fake socialism shall be replaced by genuine humanistic socialism.

Later Medieval culture flourished because people followed the vision of the *City of God*. Modern society flourished because people were energized by the vision of the growth of the *Earthly City of Progress*. In our century, however, this vision deteriorated to that of the *Tower of Babel*, which is now beginning to collapse and will ultimately bury everybody in its ruins. If the City of God and the Earthly City were *thesis* and *antithesis*, a new *synthesis* is the only alternative to chaos: the synthesis between the spiritual core of the Late Medieval world and the development of rational thought and science since the Renaissance. This synthesis is *The City of Being*.

Notes

[1] It should be mentioned here, at least in passing, that there also exists a being relationship to one's body that experiences the body as alive, and that can be expressed by saying "I am my body," rather than "I have my body"; all practices of sensory awareness attempt this being experience of the body.

[2] This and the following linguistic quotations are taken from Benveniste.

[3] Z. Fišer, one of the most outstanding, though little-known, Czech philosophers, has related the Buddhist concept of process to authentic Marxian philosophy. Unfortunately, the work has been published only in the Czech language and hence has been inaccessible to most Western readers. (I know it from a private English translation.)

[4] This information was provided by Dr. Moshe Budmor.

[5] I have analyzed the concept of Messianic Time in *You Shall Be as Gods.* The Shabbat, too, is discussed in that earlier book, as well as in the chapter on "The Sabbath Ritual" in *The Forgotten Language.*

[6] I am indebted to Rainer Funk for his thorough information about this field and for his fruitful suggestions.

[7] See the contributions of A. F. Utz, O. Schilling, H. Schumacher, and others.

[8] The above passages are taken from Otto Schilling; see also his quotations from K. Farner and T. Sommerlad.

[9] For a penetrating understanding of Buddhism, see the writings of Nyanaponika Mahatera, particularly *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* and *Pathways of Buddhist Thought: Essays from the Wheel.*

[10] Blakney uses a capital "G" for God when Eckhart refers to the Godhead and a lower-case "g" when Eckhart refers to the biblical god of creation.

[11] R. H. Tawney’s 1920 work, *The Acquisitive Society*, is still unsurpassed in its understanding of modern capitalism and option for social and human change. The contributions of Max Weber, Brentano, Schapiro, Pascal, Sombart, and Kraus contain fundamental insights for understanding industrial society’s influence on human beings.

[12] This is the limitation of even the best psychology, a point I have discussed in detail, comparing "negative psychology" and "negative theology" in an essay, "On the Limitations and Dangers of Psychology" (1959).

[13] I used the terms "spontaneous activity" in *Escape from Freedom* and "productive activity" in my later writings.

[14] The writings of W. Lange, N. Lobkowicz, and D. Mieth (1971) can provide further insights into this problem of contemplative life and active life.

[15] I have dealt with some of this evidence in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness.*

[16] In his forthcoming book *The Gamesmen: The New Corporate Leaders* (which I was privileged to read in manuscript [published with Simon and Schuster, New York 1976]), Michael Maccoby mentions some recent democratic participatory projects, especially his own research in The Bolivar Project. Bolivar is dealt with in the working papers on that project and will be the subject, along with another project, of a larger work that Maccoby is presently planning.#

[17] One of the most important sources for understanding the natural human impulse to give and to share is P. A. Kropotkin's classic, *Mutual Aid: A Factor* of *Evolution* (1902). Two other important works are *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy* by Richard Titmuss (in which he points to the manifestations of the people's wish to give, and stresses that our economic system prevents people from freely exercising their right to give), and Edmund S. Phelps, ed., *Altruism, Morality and Economic Theory.*

[18] This is the main topic in *Escape from Freedom.*

[19] I have analyzed these psalms in *You Shall Be as God*.

[20] Professor Auer's yet unpublished paper on the autonomy of ethics according to Thomas Aquinas (which I am indebted to him for letting me read in manuscript) is very helpful to an understanding of Aquinas' ethical concept. So also is his article on the question "Is sin an insult to God?" [Published under the title: "Ist die Sünde eine Beleidigung Gottes?," in: *Theologische Quartalschrift*, München/Freiburg 155 (1975), S. 53-68 (Erich Wewel Verlag).]

[21] I restrict this discussion to the fear of dying as such and shall not enter into discussion of an insoluble problem, the pain of suffering that our death can inflict upon those who love us.

[22] This chapter rests heavily upon my previous work, particularly *Escape from Freedom* (1941) and *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950), in both of which are quoted the most important books in the rich literature on this subject.

[23] Nobody has dealt with the theme of atheistic religious experience more profoundly and more boldly than has Ernst Bloch (1972).

[24] Maccoby, Michael. 1976. *The Gamesmen: The New Corporate Leaders.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

[25] Reprinted by permission. Cf. a parallel study by Ignacio Millán, *The Character* of *Mexican Executives,* to be published soon.

[26] My translation from the Hebrew text, instead of "blessings" in the Hershman translation, published by Yale University Press.

[27] This and the following passages are from Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manu*scripts, translated in *Marx's Concept of Man.*

[28] The socialist humanists' views may be found in E. Fromm, ed., *Socialist Humanism.*

[29] This and the following Schweitzer passages are my translations of quotations from *Die Schuld der Philosophie an dem Niedergang der Kultur,* first published in 1923, but sketched from 1900 to 1917.

[30] In a letter to E. R. Jacobi, Schweitzer wrote that the "religion of love can exist without a world-ruling personality" *(Divine Light,* 2, No. 1 [1967]).

[31] In order not to overburden this book I refrain from quoting the large literature that contains similar proposals. Many titles may be found in the Bibliography.

[32] I proposed this in 1955 in *The Sane Society;* the same proposal was made in a mid.1960s symposium (edited by A. Theobald; see Bibliography).

[33] I have discussed the early "matriarchate" and the literature related to it in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness.*

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ERICH FROMM

THE ANATOMY OF HUMAN DESTRUCTIVENESS

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE ART OF LOVING*

The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness

Erich Fromm

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Preface

THIS STUDY IS THE first volume of a comprehensive work on psychoanalytic theory. I started with the study of aggression and destructiveness because, aside from being one of the fundamental theoretical problems in psychoanalysis, the wave of destructiveness engulfing the world makes it also one of the most practically relevant ones.

When I started this book over six years ago I greatly underestimated the difficulties I would encounter. It soon became apparent that I could not write adequately about human destructiveness if I remained within the limits of my main field of competence, that of psychoanalysis. While this investigation is primarily meant to be a psychoanalytic one, I also needed a modicum of knowledge in other fields, particularly neurophysiology, animal psychology, paleontology, and anthropology, in order to avoid working in too narrow and, hence, a distorting frame of reference. At least I had to be able to check my conclusions with the main data from other fields to make certain that my hypotheses did not contradict them and to determine whether, as was my hope, they confirmed my hypothesis.

Since no work existed that reports and integrates the findings on aggression in all these fields, or even summarizes them in any one specific field, I had to make such an attempt myself. This attempt, I thought, would also serve my readers by offering them the possibility of sharing with me the global view of the problem of destructiveness rather than a view taken from the standpoint of a single discipline. There are, it is clear, many pitfalls in such an attempt. Obviously, I could not acquire competence in all these fields—least of all, the one in which I started out with little knowledge: the neurosciences. I was able to gain a modicum of knowledge in this field not only by studying it myself but also through the kindness of neuroscientists, a number of whom gave me guidance and answered my many questions and some of whom read the relevant part of the manuscript. Although specialists will realize that I have nothing new to offer them in their particular fields, they may also welcome the opportunity of a better acquaintance with data from other areas on a subject of such central importance.

An insoluble problem is that of repetitions and overlapping from my previous work. I have been working on the problems of man for more than thirty years and, in the process, focusing on new areas while deepening and widening my insights in older ones. I cannot possibly write about human destructiveness without presenting ideas that I have of the new concepts with which this book deals. I have tried to hold down repetition as much as possible—referring to the more extensive discussion in previous publications; but repetitions were nevertheless unavoidable. A special problem in this respect is *The Heart of Man*, which contains some of my new findings on necrophilia-biophilia in a nuclear form. My presentation of these findings is greatly expanded in the present book, both theoretically and with regard to clinical illustration. I did not discuss certain differences between the views expressed here and in previous writings, since such a discussion would have taken a great deal of space and is not of sufficient interest for most readers.

There remains only the pleasant task of expressing my thanks to those who helped me in the writing of this book.

I want to thank Dr. Jerome Brams, to whom I am much indebted for his helpfulness in the theoretical clarification of problems of behaviorism and for his never tiring assistance in the search for relevant literature.

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I am thankful to the following neuroscientists who helped me by sometimes extended personal conversations and letters: the late Dr. Raul Hernández Peón, Drs. Robert B. Livingston, Robert G. Heath, Heinz von Foerster, and Theodore Melnechuk who also read the neurophysiological sections of the manuscript. I am also indebted to Dr. Francis O. Schmitt for arranging a meeting for me with members of the Neurosciences Research Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at which members discussed questions that I addressed to them. I thank Albert Speer, who in conversation and correspondence, was most helpful in enriching my picture of Hitler. I am indebted also to Robert M. W. Kempner for information he had collected as one of the American prosecutors in the Nürnberg trials.

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In the months I was abroad, Mrs. Joan Hughes took care of the manuscript very competently and constructively, which I thankfully acknowledge.

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E. F.

New York, May 1973

Terminology

THE EQUIVOCAL USE of the word “aggression” has created great confusion in the rich literature on this topic. The term has been applied to the behavior of a man defending his life against attack, to a robber killing his victim in order to obtain money, to a sadist torturing a prisoner. The confusion goes even further: the term has been used for the sexual approach of the male to the female, to the forward-driving impulses of a mountain climber or a salesman, and to the peasant ploughing the earth. This confusion is perhaps due to the influence of behaviorist thinking in psychology and psychiatry. If one calls aggression all “noxious” acts—that is, those that have the effect of damaging or destroying a nonliving thing, a plant, an animal, or a man—then, of course, the quality of the impulse behind the noxious act is entirely irrelevant. If acts that are meant to destroy, acts that are meant to protect, and acts that are meant to construct are all denoted by one and the same word, then indeed there is no hope of understanding their “cause”; they have no common cause because they are entirely different phenomena, and one is in a theoretically hopeless position if one tries to find the cause of “aggression.”[1]

Let us take Lorenz as an example; his concept of aggression is originally that of a biologically adaptive, evolutionarily developed impulse that serves the survival of the individual and the species. But, since he applied “aggression” also to bloodlust and cruelty, the conclusion is that these irrational passions are also innate, and since wars are understood as being caused by pleasure in killing, the further conclusion is that wars are caused by an innate destructive trend in human nature. The word “aggression” serves conveniently as a bridge to connect biologically adaptive aggression (which is not evil) with human destructiveness which indeed is evil. The core of this kind of “reasoning” is:

Biologically adaptive aggression	= innate
Destructiveness and cruelty	= aggression
Ergo: Destructiveness and cruelty	= innate. Q.E.D.

In this book I have used the term “aggression” for defensive, reactive aggression that I have subsumed under “benign aggression,” but call “destructiveness” and “cruelty” the specifically human propensity to destroy and to crave for absolute control (“malignant aggression”). Whenever I have used “aggression” because it seemed useful in a certain context other than in the sense of defensive aggression, I have qualified it, to avoid misunderstanding.

Another semantic problem is offered by the use of “man” as a word to denote mankind, or humankind. The usage of the word “man” for both man and woman is not surprising in a language that has developed in patriarchal society, but I believe it would be somewhat pedantic to avoid the word in order to make the point that the author does not use it in the spirit of patriarchalism. In effect, the contents of the book should make that clear beyond any doubt.

I have also, in general, used the word “he” when I referred to human beings, because to say “he or she” each time would be awkward; I believe words are very important, but also that one should not make a fetish of them and become more interested in the words than in the thought they express.

In the interest of careful documentation, quotations within this book are accompanied by citations of author and year of publication. This is to enable the reader to find the fuller reference in the Bibliography. The dates are not, therefore, always related to the time of writing, as in the citation Spinoza (1927).

[1]It should be noted, though, that Freud was not unaware of the distinctions of aggression. (Cf. the Appendix.) Furthermore, in Freud’s case the underlying motive is hardly to be found in a behavioristic orientation; more likely he just followed the customary usage and, in addition chose the most general terms, in order to accommodate his own broad categories such as death instinct.

As the generations pass they grow worse. A time will come when they have grown so wicked that they will worship power; might will be right to them and reverence for the good will cease to be. At last, when no man is angry any more at wrongdoings or feels shame in the presence of the miserable, Zeus will destroy them too. And yet even then something might be done, if only the common people would rise and put down rulers that oppress them.

—Greek myth on the Iron Age

When I look at history, I am a pessimist … but when I look at prehistory, I am an optimist.

—J. C. Smuts

On the one hand, man is akin to many species of animals in that he fights his own species. But on the other hand, he is, among the thousands of species that fight, the only one in which fighting is disruptive… Man is the only species that is a mass murderer, the only misfit in his own society.

—N. Tinbergen

Introduction:

Instincts and Human Passions

THE INCREASE IN VIOLENCE and destructiveness on a national and world scale has turned the attention of professionals and the general public alike to the theoretical inquiry into the nature and causes of aggression. Such a concern is not surprising; what is surprising is the fact that this preoccupation is so recent, especially since an investigator of the towering stature of Freud, revising his earlier theory centered around the sexual drive, had already in the 1920s formulated a new theory in which the passion to destroy ("death instinct") was considered equal in strength to the passion to love ("life instinct," "sexuality"). The public, however, continued to think of Freudianism chiefly in terms of presenting the libido as man's central passion, checked only by the instinct for self-preservation.

This situation changed only in the middle of the sixties. One probable reason for this change was the fact that the level of violence and the fear of war had passed a certain threshold throughout the world. But a contributing factor was the publication of several books dealing with human aggression, particularly *On Aggression* by Konrad Lorenz (1966). Lorenz, a prominent scholar in the field of animal behavior[1] and particularly that of fishes and birds, decided to venture out into a field in which he had little experience or competence, that of *human* behavior. Although rejected by most psychologists and neuroscientists, *On Aggression* became a bestseller and made a deep impression on the minds of a vast sector of the educated community, many of whom accepted Lorenz's view as the final answer to the problem.

The popular success of Lorenz's ideas was greatly enhanced by the earlier work of an author of a very different type, Robert Ardrey *(African Genesis*, 1961, and *The Territorial Imperative,* 1967*).* Not a scientist but a gifted playwright, Ardrey wove together many data about man's beginnings into an eloquent though very biased brief that was to prove man's innate aggressiveness. These books were followed by those of other students of

animal behavior, such as *The Naked Ape (*1967*)* by Desmond Morris and *On Love and Hate (*1972*)* by Lorenz's disciple, I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt.

All these works contain basically the same thesis: man's aggressive behavior as manifested in war, crime, personal quarrels, and all kinds of destructive and sadistic behavior is due to a phylogenetically programmed, innate instinct which seeks for discharge and waits for the proper occasion to be expressed.

Perhaps Lorenz's neoinstinctivism was so successful not because his arguments are so strong, but because people are so susceptible to them, What could be more welcome to people who are frightened and feel impotent to change the course leading to destruction than a theory that assures us that violence stems from our animal nature, from an ungovernable drive for aggression, and that the best we can do, as Lorenz asserts, is to understand the law of evolution that accounts for the power of this drive? This *theory* of an innate aggressiveness easily becomes an *ideology* that helps to soothe the fear of what is to happen and to rationalize the sense of impotence.

There are other reasons to prefer this simplistic answer of an instinctivist theory to the serious study of the causes of destructiveness. The latter calls for the questioning of the basic premises of current ideology; we are led to analyze the irrationality of our social system and to violate taboos hiding behind dignified words, such as "defense," "honor," and "patriotism." Nothing short of an analysis in depth of our social system can disclose the reasons for the increase in destructiveness, or suggest ways and means of reducing it. The instinctivistic theory offers to relieve us of the hard task of making such an analysis. It implies that, even if we all must perish, we can at least do so with the conviction that our "nature" forced this fate upon us, and that we understand why everything had to happen as it did.

Given the present alignment in psychological thought, criticism of Lorenz's theory of human aggression is expected to fit into the other and dominant theory in psychology, that of *behaviorism.* In contrast to instinctivism, behaviorist theory does not interest itself in the subjective forces which drive man to behave in a certain way; it is not concerned with what he feels, but only in the way he behaves and in the social conditioning that shapes his behavior.

It was only in the twenties that the focus in psychology shifted radically from *feeling* to *behavior,* with emotions and passions thereafter removed from many psychologists' field of vision as irrelevant data, at least from a scientific standpoint. The subject matter of the dominant school in psychology became *behavior,* not *the behaving man:* the "science of the psyche" was transformed into the science of the engineering of animal and human conduct. This development has reached its peak in Skinner's neo-behaviorism, which is today the most widely accepted psychological theory in the universities of the United States.

The reason for this transformation of psychology is easy to find. The student of man is, more than any other scientist, influenced by the atmosphere of his society. This is so because not only are his ways of thinking, his interests, the questions he raises, all partly socially determined as in the natural sciences, but in his case the subject matter itself, man, is thus determined. Whenever a psychologist speaks of man, his model is that of the men around him–and most of all himself. In contemporary industrial society, men are cerebrally oriented, feel little, and consider emotions a useless ballast—those of the psychologists as well as those of their subjects. The behavioristic theory seems to fit them well.

The present alternative between instinctivism and behaviorism is not favorable to theoretical progress. Both positions are "monoexplanatory," depending on dogmatic preconceptions, and investigators are required to fit data in one or the other explanation. But are we really confronted with the alternative of accepting either the instinctivist or the behaviorist theory? Are we forced to choose between Lorenz and Skinner; are there no other options? This book affirms that there is another option, and examines the question of what it is.

We must distinguish in man *two entirely different kinds of aggression.* The first, which he shares with all animals, is a phylogenetically programmed impulse to attack (or to flee) when vital interests are threatened. This *defensive,* "benign" aggression is in the service of the survival of the individual and the species, is biologically adaptive, and ceases when the threat has ceased to exist. The other type, "malignant" aggression, i.e., *cruelty and destructiveness,* is specific to the human species and virtually absent in most mammals; it is not phylogenetically programmed and not biologically adaptive; it has no purpose, and its satisfaction is lustful. Most previous discussion of the subject has been

vitiated by the failure to distinguish between these two kinds of aggression, each of which has different sources and different qualities.

Defensive aggression is, indeed, part of human nature, even though not an "innate"[2] instinct, as it used to be classified. In so far as Lorenz speaks of aggression as defense, he is right in his assumptions about the aggressive instinct (even though the theory regarding its spontaneity and self-renewing quality is scientifically untenable. But Lorenz goes further. By a number of ingenious constructions he considers *all* human aggression, including the passion to kill and to torture, as being an outcome of biologically given aggression, transformed from a beneficial to destructive force because of a number of factors. However, so many empirical data speak against this hypothesis as to make it virtually untenable. The study of animals shows that mammals—and especially the primates—although possessing a good deal of defensive aggression, are not killers and torturers. Paleontology, anthropology, and history offer ample evidence against the instinctivistic thesis: (1) human groups differ so fundamentally in the respective degree of destructiveness that the facts could hardly be explained by the assumption that destructiveness and cruelty are innate; (2) various degrees of destructiveness can be correlated to other psychical factors and to differences in respective social structures, and (3) the degree of destructiveness increases with the increased development of civilization, rather than the opposite. Indeed, the picture of innate destructiveness fits history much better than prehistory. If man were endowed only with the biologically adaptive aggression that he shares with his animal ancestors he would be a relatively peaceful being; if chimpanzees had psychologists, the latter would hardly consider aggression a disturbing problem about which they should write books.

However, man differs from the animal by the fact that he is a killer; he is the only primate that kills and tortures members of his own species without any reason, either biological or economic, and who feels satisfaction in doing so. It is this biologically non-adaptive and non-phylogenetically programmed, "malignant" aggression that constitutes the real problem and the danger to man's existence as a species, and it is the main aim of this book to analyze the nature and the conditions of this destructive aggression.

The distinction between benign-defensive and malignant-destructive aggression calls for a further and more fundamental distinction, that

between *instinct*[3] and *character,* or more precisely, between drives rooted in man's physiological needs (organic drives) and those specifically human passions rooted in his character ("character-rooted, or human passions"). The distinction between instinct and character will be further discussed at great length in the text. I shall try to show that character is man's "second nature," the substitute for his poorly developed instincts; furthermore that the human passions (such as the striving for love, tenderness, freedom as well as the lust for destruction, sadism, masochism, the craving for power and property) are answers to "existential needs," which in turn are rooted in the very conditions of human existence. To put it briefly, *instincts* are answers to man's *physiological* needs, man's character-conditioned *passions* are answers to his *existential* needs and they are specifically human. While these existential needs are the same for all men, men differ among themselves with regard to their dominant passions. To give an example: man can be driven by love or by the passion to destroy; in each case he satisfies one of his existential needs: the need to "effect," or to move something, to "make a dent." Whether man's dominant passion is love or whether it is destructiveness depends largely on social circumstances; these circumstances, however, operate in reference to man's biologically given existential situation and the needs springing from it and not to an infinitely malleable, undifferentiated psyche, as environmentalist theory assumes.

When we want to know, however, what the conditions of human existence are, we are led to further questions: what is man's nature? What is it by virtue of which he is man? Needless to say, the present climate in the social sciences is not very hospitable to the discussion of such problems. They are generally considered the subject matter of philosophy and religion; in terms of positivistic thinking, they are treated as purely subjective speculations without any claim to objective validity. Since it would be inopportune to anticipate at this point the complex argument on the data offered later, I shall content myself now with only a few remarks. In our attempt to define the essence of man, we are not referring to an abstraction arrived at by the way of metaphysical speculations like those of Heidegger and Sartre. We refer to the real conditions of existence common to man qua man, so that the essence of each individual is identical with the existence of the species. We arrive at this concept by empirical analysis of the anatomical and neurophysiological structure and its psychical

correlations which characterize the species *homo*. We thus shift the principle of explanation of human passions from Freud's *physiological* to a *sociobiological* and historical principle. Since the species *Homo sapiens* can be defined in anatomical, neurological and physiological terms, we should also be able to define him as a species in psychical terms. The point of view from which these problems will be treated here may be called existentialist, albeit not in the sense of existentialist philosophy.

This theoretical basis opens up the possibility for a detailed discussion of the various forms of character-rooted, malignant aggression, especially of *sadism*—the passion for unrestricted power over another sentient being—and of *necrophilia*—the passion to destroy life and the attraction to all that is dead, decaying, and purely mechanical. The understanding of these character structures will, I hope, be facilitated by the analysis of the character of a number of well-known sadists and destroyers of the recent past: Stalin, Himmler, Hitler.

Having traced the steps this study will follow, it may be useful to indicate, if only briefly, some of the general premises and conclusions the reader will find in the following chapters: (1) We will not be concerned with behavior separated from the behaving man; we shall deal with the human drives, regardless of whether or not they are expressed in immediately observable behavior. This means, with regard to the phenomenon of aggression, we will study the origin and intensity of aggressive impulses and not aggressive behavior independent from its motivation. (2) These impulses can be conscious, but more often they are unconscious. (3) They are, most of the time, integrated in a relatively stable character structure. (4) In a more general formulation, this study is based on the theory of psychoanalysis. From this follows that the method we will use is the psychoanalytic method of discovering the unconscious inner reality through interpretation of the observable and often seemingly insignificant data. The term "psychoanalysis," however, is not used in reference to the classic theory, but to a certain revision of it. Key aspects of this revision will be discussed later; at this point I should like to say only that it is not a psychoanalysis based on the libido theory, thereby avoiding the instinctivistic concepts that are generally assumed to be the very essence of Freud's theory.

This identification of Freudian theory with instinctivism, however, is very much open to doubt. Freud was actually the first modern psychologist

who, in contrast to the dominant trend, investigated the realm of human passions—love, hate, ambition, greed, jealousy, envy; passions which had previously been dealt with only by dramatists and novelists became, through Freud, the subject matter of scientific exploration.[4] This may explain why his work found a much warmer and more understanding reception among artists than among psychiatrists and psychologists—at least up to the time when his method became the instrument to satisfy an increasing demand for psychotherapy. Here, the artists felt, was the first scientist who dealt with their own subject matter, man's "soul," in its most secret and subtle manifestations. Surrealism showed this impact of Freud on artistic thinking most clearly. In contrast to older art forms, it dismissed "reality" as irrelevant, and was not concerned with behavior—all that mattered was the subjective experience; it was only logical that Freud's interpretation of dreams should become one of the most important influences for its development.

Freud could not but conceive his new findings in the concepts and terminology of his own time. Never having freed himself from the materialism of his teachers, he had, as it were, to find a way to disguise human passions, presenting them as outcomes of an instinct. He did this brilliantly by a theoretical *tour de force;* he enlarged the concept of sexuality (libido) to such an extent that all human passions (aside from self-preservation) could be understood as the outcome of one instinct. Love, hate, greed, vanity, ambition, avarice, jealousy, cruelty, tenderness—all were forced into the straitjacket of this scheme and dealt with theoretically as sublimations of, or reaction formations against the various manifestations of narcissistic, oral, anal, and genital libido.

In the second period of his work, however, Freud tried to break out of this scheme by presenting a new theory, which was a decisive step forward in the understanding of destructiveness. He recognized that life is not ruled by two egoistic drives, one for food, the other for sex, but by two passions —love and destruction—that do not serve physiological survival in the same sense that hunger and sexuality do. Still bound by his theoretical premises, however, he called them "life instinct" and "death instinct," and thereby gave human destructiveness its importance as one of two fundamental passions in man.

This study frees such passions as the strivings to love, to be free, as well as the drive to destroy, to torture, to control, and to submit, from their

forced marriage to instincts. Instincts are a purely natural category, while the character-rooted passions are a sociobiological, historical category.[5] Although not directly serving physical survival they are as strong—and often even stronger—than instincts. They form the basis for man's interest in life, his enthusiasm, his excitement; they are the stuff from which not only his dreams are made but art, religion, myth, drama—all that makes life worth living. Man cannot live as nothing but an object, as dice thrown out of a cup; he suffers severely when he is reduced to the level of a feeding or propagating machine, even if he has all the security he wants. Man seeks for drama and excitement; when he cannot get satisfaction on a higher level, he creates for himself the drama of destruction.

The contemporary climate of thought encourages the axiom that a motive can be intense only when it serves an organic need—i.e., that only instincts have intense motivating power. If one discards this mechanistic, reductionist viewpoint and starts from a holistic premise, one begins to realize that man's passions must be seen in terms of their function for the life process of the whole organism. Their intensity is not due to specific physiological needs, but to the need of the whole organism to survive—to grow both physically and mentally.

These passions do not become powerful only *after* the physiological needs have been satisfied. They are at the very root of human existence, and not a kind of luxury which we can afford after the normal, "lower" needs have been satisfied. People have committed suicide because of their failure to realize their passions for love, power, fame, revenge. Cases of suicide because of a lack of sexual satisfaction are virtually nonexistent. These non-instinctual passions excite man, fire him on, make life worth living; as von Holbach, the philosopher of the French Enlightenment once said: "*Un homme sans passion et désires cesserait d'etre un homme.*" ("A man without passions or desires would cease to be a man.") (P. H. D. d'Holbach, 1822.) They are so intense precisely because man would not be man without them.[6]

The human passions transform man from a mere thing into a hero, into a being that in spite of tremendous handicaps tries to make sense of life. He wants to be his own creator, to transform his state of being unfinished into one with some goal and some purpose, allowing him to achieve some degree of integration. Man's passions are not banal psychological complexes that can be adequately explained as caused by childhood

traumata. They can be understood only if one goes beyond the realm of reductionist psychology and recognizes them for what they are: *man's attempt to make sense out of life and to experience the optimum of intensity and strength he can (or believes he can) achieve under the given circumstances.* They are his religion, his cult, his ritual, which he has to hide (even from himself) in so far as they are disapproved of by his group. To be sure, by bribery and blackmail, i.e., by skillful conditioning, he can be persuaded to relinquish his "religion" and to be converted to the general cult of the no-self, the automaton. But this psychic cure deprives him of the best he has, of being a man and not a thing.

The truth is that all human passions, both the "good" and the "evil," can be understood only as a person's attempt to make sense of his life and transcend banal, merely life-sustaining existence. Change of personality is possible only if he is able to "convert himself" to a new way of making sense of life by mobilizing his life-furthering passions and thus experiencing a superior sense of vitality and integration to the one he had before. Unless this happens he can be domesticated, but he cannot be cured. But even though the life-furthering passions are conducive to a greater sense of strength, joy, integration, and vitality than destructiveness and cruelty, the latter are as much an answer to the problem of human existence as the former. Even the most sadistic and destructive man is human, as human as the saint. He can be called a warped and sick man who has failed to achieve a better answer to the challenge of having been born human, and this is true; he can also be called a man who took the wrong way in search of his salvation.[7]

These considerations by no means imply, however, that destructiveness and cruelty are not vicious; they only imply that vice is human. They are indeed destructive of life, of body and spirit, destructive not only of the victim but of the destroyer himself. They constitute a paradox: they express *life turning against itself in the striving to make sense of it.* They are the only true perversion. Understanding them does not mean condoning them. But unless we understand them, we have no way to recognize how they may be reduced, and what factors tend to increase them.

Such understanding is of particular importance today, when sensitivity toward destructiveness-cruelty is rapidly diminishing, and necrophilia, the attraction to what is dead, decaying, lifeless, and purely mechanical, is increasing throughout our cybernetic industrial society, The spirit of

necrophilia was expressed first in literary form by F. T. Marinetti in his *Futurist Manifesto* of 1909. The same tendency can be seen in much of the art and literature of the last decades that exhibits a particular fascination with all that is decayed, unalive, destructive, and mechanical. The Falangist motto, "Long live death," threatens to become the secret principle of a society in which the conquest of nature by the machine constitutes the very meaning of progress, and where the living person becomes an appendix to the machine.

This study tries to clarify the nature of this necrophilous passion and the social conditions that tend to foster it. The conclusion will be that help in any broad sense can come only through radical changes in our social and political structure that would reinstate man to his supreme role in society. The call for "law and order" (rather than for life and structure) and for stricter punishment of criminals, as well as the obsession with violence and destruction among some "revolutionaries," are only further instances of the powerful attraction of necrophilia in the contemporary world. We need to create the conditions that would make the growth of man, this unfinished and uncompleted being—unique in nature—the supreme goal of all social arrangements. Genuine freedom and independence and the end of all forms of exploitative control are the conditions for mobilizing the love of life, which is the only force that can defeat the love for the dead.

[1]Lorenz gave the name "ethology" to the study of animal behavior, which is peculiar terminology since ethology means literally "the science of behavior" (from the Greek *ethos* "conduct," "norm"). To denote the study of animal behavior Lorenz should halve called it "animal ethology." That he did not choose to qualify ethology implies, of course, his idea that human behavior is to be subsumed under animal behavior. It is an interesting fact that John Stuart Mill, long before Lorenz, had coined the term "ethology" as denoting the science of *character.* If I wanted to put the main point of this book in a nutshell I would say that it deals with "ethology" in Mill's and not in Lorenz's sense.

[2]Recently Lorenz has qualified the concept of "innate" by acknowledging the simultaneous presence of the factor of learning. (K. Lorenz, 1965.)

[3]The term "instinct" is used here provisionally, although it is somewhat dated. Later on I shall use the term "organic drives."

[4]Most older psychologies, such as that in the Buddhist writings, the Greeks, and the medieval and modern psychology up to Spinoza, dealt with the human passions as their main subject matter by a

method combining careful observation (although without experimentation) and critical thinking.

[5]Cf. R. B. Livingston (1967) on the question of the extent some of them are built into the brain; discussed in chapter 10.

[6]This statement by Holbach is of course to be understood in the context of the philosophical thinking of his time. Buddhist or Spinozist philosophy have an entirely different concept of passions; from their standpoint Holbach's description would be empirically true for the majority of people, but Holbach's position is exactly the opposite of what they consider to be the goal of human development. In order to appreciate the difference I refer to the distinction between "irrational passions," such as ambition and greed, and "rational passions," such as love and care for all sentient beings (which will be discussed later on). What is relevant in the text, however, is not this difference, but the idea that life concerned mainly with its own maintenance is inhuman.

[7]"Salvation" comes from the Latin root *sal*, "salt" (in Spanish *salud*, "health"). The meaning stems from the fact that salt protects meat from decomposition; "salvation" is the protection of man from decomposition (to protect his health and well-being). In this sense each man needs "salvation" in a nontheological sense).

Part I:

Instinctivism, Behaviorism, Psychoanalysis

1. The Instinctivists

The Older Instinctivists

I WILL FORGO PRESENTING here a history of instinct theory as the reader can find it in many textbooks.[1] This history began far back in philosophical thought, but as far as modern thought is concerned, it dates from the work of Charles Darwin. All post-Darwinian research on instincts has been based on Darwin's theory of evolution.

William James (1890), William McDougall (1913, 1932) and others have drawn up long lists in which each individual instinct was supposed to motivate corresponding kinds of behavior, such as James's instincts of imitation, rivalry, pugnacity, sympathy, hunting, fear, acquisitiveness, kleptomania, constructiveness, play, curiosity, sociability, secretiveness, cleanliness, modesty, love, and jealousy—a strange mixture of universal human qualities and specific socially conditioned character traits. (J. J. McDermott, ed., 1967.) Although these lists of instincts appear today somewhat naive, the work of these instinctivists is highly sophisticated, rich in theoretical constructions, and still impressive by its level of theoretical thought; it is by no means dated. Thus, for instance, James simply was quite aware that there might be an element of learning even in the first performance of an instinct, and McDougall was not unaware of the molding influence of different experiences and cultural backgrounds. The instinctivism of the latter forms a bridge to Freud's theory. As Fletcher has emphasized, McDougall did not identify instinct with a "motor mechanism" and a rigidly fixed motor response. For him the core of an instinct was a *"propensity,"* a "craving," and this affective-connative core of each instinct "seems capable of functioning in relative independence of both the cognitive and the motor part of the total instinctive disposition." (W. McDougall, 1932.)

Before discussing the two best-known modern representatives of the instinctivistic theory, the "neoinstinctivists" Sigmund Freud and Konrad Lorenz, let us look at a feature common to both them and the older instinctivists: the conception of the instinctivistic model in mechanistic-

hydraulic terms. McDougall envisaged energy held back by “sluice gates” and “bubbling over” (W. McDougall, 1913) under certain conditions. Later he used an analogy in which each instinct was pictured as a “chamber in which gas is constantly liberated.” (W. McDougall, 1923.) Freud, in his concept of the libido theory, also followed a hydraulic scheme. The libido increases ———> tension rises ———> unpleasure increases; the sexual act decreases tension and unpleasure until the tension begins to rise again. Similarly, Lorenz thought of reaction specific energy like “a gas constantly being pumped into a container” or as a liquid in a reservoir that can discharge through a spring-loaded valve at the bottom. (K. Lorenz, 1950.) R. A. Hinde has pointed out that in spite of various differences, these and other instinct models “share the idea of a substance capable of energizing behaviors, held back in a container and subsequently released in action.” (R. A. Hinde, 1960.)

The Neoinstinctivists: Sigmund Freud and Konrad Lorenz

Freud’s Concept of Aggression[2]

The great step forward made by Freud beyond the older instinctivists, and particularly McDougall, was that he unified all “instincts” under two categories—the sexual instincts and the instinct for self-preservation. Thus Freud’s theory can be considered the last step in the development of the history of the instinct theory; as I shall show later, this very unification of the instincts under one (with the exception of the ego instinct) was also the first step in overcoming the whole instinctivistic concept, even though Freud was not aware of this. In the following I shall deal only with Freud’s concept of aggression, since his libido theory is well known to many readers and can be read in other works, best of all in Freud’s *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1915-1916, 1916-1917, and 1933*).*

Freud had paid relatively little attention to the phenomenon of aggression as long as he considered sexuality (libido) and self-preservation the two forces dominating man. From the 1920*s* on, this picture changed completely. In *The Ego and the Id* (1923) and in his later writings, he postulated a new dichotomy: that of life instinct(s) (Eros) and death instinct(s). Freud described the new theoretical phase in the following

terms: “Starting from speculations on the beginning of life and from biological parallels I drew the conclusion that, besides the instinct to preserve living substance, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primaeval, inorganic state. That is to say, as well as Eros there was an instinct of death.” (S. Freud, 1930.)

The death instinct is directed against the organism itself and thus is a self-destructive drive, or it is directed outward, and in this case tends to destroy others rather than oneself. When blended with sexuality, the death instinct is transformed into more harmless impulses expressed in sadism or masochism. Even though Freud suggested at various times that the power of the death instinct can be reduced (S. Freud, 1927), the basic assumption remained: man was under the sway of an impulse to destroy either himself or others, and he could do little to escape this tragic alternative. It follows that, from the position of the death instinct, aggression was not essentially a reaction to stimuli but a constantly flowing impulse rooted in the constitution of the human organism.

The majority of psychoanalysts, while following Freud in every other way, refused to accept the theory of the death instinct; perhaps this was because this theory transcended the old mechanistic frame of reference and required biological thinking that was unacceptable to most, for whom “biological” was identical with the physiology of the instincts. Nevertheless, they did not altogether reject Freud’s new position. They made a compromise by acknowledging a “destructive instinct” as the other pole of the sexual instinct, and thus they could accept Freud’s new emphasis on aggression without submitting to an entirely new kind of thinking.

Freud had taken an important step forward, passing from a purely physiological-mechanistic to a biological approach that considers the organism as a whole and analyzes the biological sources of love and hate. His theory, however, suffers from severe defects. It is based on rather abstract speculations and offers hardly any convincing *empirical evidence.* Furthermore, while Freud brilliantly tried to interpret *human* impulses in terms of the new theory, his hypothesis is inconsistent with animal behavior. For him, the death instinct is a biological force in all living organisms: this should mean that animals, too, express their death instinct either against themselves or against others. Hence one should find more illness or early

death in less outwardly aggressive animals, and vice versa; but, of course, there are no data supporting this idea.

That aggression and destructiveness are not biologically given and spontaneously flowing impulses will be demonstrated in the next chapter. At this point I only want to add that Freud has greatly obscured the analysis of the phenomenon of aggression by following the custom of using the term for the most different kinds of aggression, thus facilitating his attempt to explain them all by *one* instinct. Since he was certainly not behavioristically inclined, we may assume that the reason was his general tendency to arrive at a dualistic concept in which two basic forces are opposed to each other. This dichotomy was at first that between self-preservation and libido, and later that between life and death instincts. For the elegance of these concepts, Freud had to pay the price of subsuming every passion under one of the two poles, and hence of putting together trends which in reality do not belong together.

Lorenz's Theory of Aggression

While Freud's theory of aggression was and still is very influential, it was complex and difficult and has never been popular in the sense that it was read by and impressed a popular audience. On the contrary, Konrad Lorenz's *On Aggression* (K. Lorenz, 1966) became within a short time of its publication one of the most widely read books in the field of social psychology.

The reasons for this popularity are not difficult to discern. First of all, *On Aggression* is an immensely readable book, much like Lorenz's earlier, charming *King Solomon's Ring* (1952), and quite different in this respect from Freud's heavy treatises on the death instinct or, for that matter, Lorenz's own papers and books written for the specialist. Furthermore, as was pointed out earlier in the introduction, it appeals to the thinking of many people today who prefer to believe that our drift toward violence and nuclear war is due to biological factors beyond our control, rather than to open their eyes and see that it is due to social, political, and economic circumstances of our own making.

For Lorenz,[3] as for Freud, human aggressiveness is an instinct fed by an ever-flowing fountain of energy, and not necessarily the result of a *reaction* to outer stimuli. Lorenz holds that energy specific for an instinctive

act accumulates continuously in the neural centers related to that behavior pattern, and if enough energy has been accumulated an *explosion* is likely to occur even without the presence of a stimulus. However, the animal and man usually find stimuli which release the dammed-up energy of the drive; they do not have to wait passively until the proper stimulus appears. They search for, and even produce stimuli. Following W. Craig, Lorenz called this behavior "appetite behavior." Man, he says, creates political parties in order to find stimuli for the release of dammed-up energy, rather than political parties being the cause of aggression. But in cases where no outside stimulus can be found or produced, the energy of the dammed-up aggressive drive is so great that it will explode, as it were, and be acted out *in vacuo*, i.e., "without demonstrable external stimulation … the vacuum activity performed without an object—exhibits truly photographic similarity to normal performance of the motor actions involved… This demonstrates that the motor coordination patterns of the instinctive behavior pattern are hereditarily determined down to the finest detail." (K. Lorenz, 1970; originally in German, 1931-42.)[4]

For Lorenz, then, aggression is primarily *not* a reaction to outside stimuli, but a "built-in" inner excitation that seeks for release and will find expression regardless of how adequate the outer stimulus is: "*It is the spontaneity of the instinct that makes it so dangerous.*" (K. Lorenz, 1966. Italics added.) Lorenz's model of aggression, like Freud's model of the libido, has been rightly called a *hydraulic* model, in analogy to the pressure exercised by dammed-up water or steam in a closed container.

This hydraulic concept of aggression is, as it were, one pillar on which Lorenz's theory rests; it refers to the *mechanism* through which aggression is produced. The other pillar is the idea that aggression is in the service of life, that it serves the survival of the individual and of the species. Broadly speaking, Lorenz assumes that intraspecific aggression (aggression among members of the same species) has the function of furthering the survival of the species. Lorenz proposes that aggression fulfills this function by the spacing out of individuals of one species over the available habitat; by selection of the "better man," relevant in conjunction with the defense of the female, and by establishing a social rank order. (K. Lorenz, 1964.) Aggression can have this preservative function all the more effectively because in the process of evolution deadly aggression has been transformed

into behavior consisting of symbolic and ritual threats which fulfill the same function without harming the species.

But Lorenz argues, the instinct that served the animal's survival has become "grotesquely exaggerated," and has "gone wild" in man. Aggression has been transformed into a threat rather than a help to survival.

It seems as if Lorenz himself had not been satisfied with these explanations of human aggression and felt a need to add another that leads, however, outside the field of ethology. He writes:

> Above all, it is more than probable that the destructive intensity of the aggressive drive, still *a hereditary* evil of mankind, is the consequence of a process of intra-specific selection which worked on our forefathers for roughly forty thousand years, that is, throughout the Early Stone Age. [Lorenz probably means the Late Stone Age.] When man had reached the stage of having weapons, clothing, and social organization, so overcoming the dangers of starving, freezing, and being eaten by wild animals, and these dangers ceased to be the essential factors influencing selection, an evil infra-specific selection must have set in. The factor influencing selection was now the wars waged between hostile neighboring tribes. These must have evolved in an extreme form of all those so-called "warrior virtues" which unfortunately many people still regard as desirable ideals. (K. Lorenz, 1966)

This picture of the constant war among the "savage" hunters-food-gatherers since the full emergence of homo sapiens around 40,000 or 50,000 B.C. is a widely accepted cliché adopted by Lorenz without reference to the investigations which tend to show that there is no evidence for it.[5] Lorenz's assumption of forty thousand years of organized warfare is nothing but the old Hobbesian cliché of war as the natural state of man, presented as an argument to prove the innateness of human aggressiveness. The logic of Lorenz's assumption is that man is aggressive because he was aggressive; and he was aggressive because he is aggressive.

Even if Lorenz were right in his thesis of continuous warfare in the Late Paleolithic, his genetic reasoning is open to question. If a certain trait is to have a selective advantage this must be based on the increased production of fertile offspring of the carriers of the trait. But in view of the

likelihood of a higher loss of the aggressive individuals in wars, it is doubtful whether selection could account for the maintenance of a high incidence of this trait. In fact, if one considers such a loss as negative selection, the gene frequency should diminish.[6] Actually, the population density in that age was extremely low, and for many of the human tribes after the full emergence of *Homo sapiens* there was little need to compete and to fight each other for food or space.

Lorenz has combined two elements in his theory. The first is that animals as well as men are innately endowed with aggression, serving the survival of the individual and the species. As I shall show later, the neurophysiological findings show that this defensive aggression is a reaction to threats to the animal's vital interests, and does not flow spontaneously and continually. The other element, the hydraulic character of dammed-up aggression, is used to explain the murderous and cruel impulses of man, but little supporting evidence is presented. Both a life-serving and a destructive aggression are subsumed under one category, and what connects them is mainly a word: "aggression." In contrast to Lorenz, Tinbergen has expressed the problem in full clarity: "On the one hand, man is akin to many species of animals in that he fights his own species. But on the other hand, he is, among the thousands of species that fight, the only one in which fighting is disruptive… Man is the only species that is a mass murderer, the only misfit in his own society. Why should this be so?" (N. Tinbergen, 1968.)

Freud and Lorenz: Their Similarities and Differences

The relationship between Lorenz's and Freud's theories is a complicated one. They have in common the hydraulic concept of aggression, even though they explain the origin of the drive differently. But they seem to be diametrically opposed to each other in another aspect. Freud hypothesized a destructive instinct, an assumption which Lorenz declares to be untenable on biological grounds. His aggressive drive serves life, and Freud's death instinct is the servant of death.

But this difference loses most of its significance in the light of Lorenz's account of the vicissitudes of the originally defensive and life-serving aggression. By a number of complicated and often questionable constructions, defensive aggression is supposed to be transformed in man

into a spontaneously flowing and self-increasing drive that seeks to create circumstances which facilitate the expression of aggression, or that even explodes when no stimuli can be found or created. Hence even in a society that is organized from a socioeconomic viewpoint in such a way that major aggression could find no proper stimuli, the very demand of the aggressive instinct would force its members to change it or, if they would not, aggression would explode even without any stimulus. Thus the conclusion at which Lorenz arrives, that man is driven by an innate force to destroy, is, for all practical purposes, the same as Freud's. Freud, however, sees the destructive drive opposed by the equally strong force of Eros (life, sex), while for Lorenz love itself is a product of the aggressive instinct.

Both Freud and Lorenz agree that the failure to express aggression in action is unhealthy. Freud had postulated in the earlier period of his work that repression of sexuality can lead to mental illness; later on he applied the same principle to the death instinct and taught that the repression of outward-directed aggression is unhealthy. Lorenz states that "present-day civilized man suffers from insufficient discharge of his aggressive drive." Both, by different routes, arrive at a picture of man in which aggressive-destructive energy is continuously produced, and very difficult, if not impossible in the long run, to control. The so-called evil in animals becomes a real evil in man, even though according to Lorenz its roots are not evil.

"Proof" by Analogy

These similarities between Freud's and Lorenz's respective theories about aggression must not, however, becloud their main difference. Freud was a student of men, a keen observer of their manifest behavior and of the various manifestations of their unconscious. His theory of the death instinct may be wrong, or incomplete, or it may rest on insufficient evidence, yet it was gained in the process of constant observation of man. Lorenz, on the other hand, is an observer of animals, especially of the lower animals, and doubtless a very competent one. But his knowledge about man does not go beyond that of an average person; he has not refined it either by systematic observation or by sufficient acquaintance with the literature.[7] He naively assumes that observations about himself and acquaintances are applicable to all men. His main method, however, is not even self-observation, but

analogies drawn from the behavior of certain animals to that of man. Scientifically speaking, such analogies prove nothing; they are suggestive and pleasing to the lover of animals. They go together with a high degree of anthropomorphizing that Lorenz indulges in. Precisely because they give the pleasant illusion to a person that he "understands" what the animal is "feeling" they become very popular. Who would not like to possess King Solomon's ring?

Lorenz bases his theories of the hydraulic nature of aggression on experiments with animals—mainly fish and birds under conditions of captivity. The question at issue is: Does the same aggressive drive that leads to killing unless it is redirected—which Lorenz observed in certain fish and birds—also operate in man?

Since there is no direct proof for this hypothesis with regard to man and the nonhuman primates, Lorenz presents a number of arguments to prove his point. His main approach is by way of *analogy;* he discovers similarities between human behavior and the behavior of the animals studied by him, and concludes that both kinds of behavior have the same cause. This method has been criticized by many psychologists; already in 1948, Lorenz's eminent colleague, N. Tinbergen, was aware of the dangers *"inherent in the procedure of using physiological evidence from lower evolutionary levels, lower levels of neural organizations, and simpler forms of behavior as analogies for the support of physiological theories of behavior mechanisms at higher and more complex levels."* (N. Tinbergen, 1948. Italics added.)

A few examples will illustrate Lorenz's "proof by analogy."[8] Speaking about cichlids and Brazilian mother-of-pearl fish, Lorenz reports the observation that if each fish can discharge its healthy anger on a neighbor of the same sex it does not attack its own mate ("redirected aggression").[9] He then comments:

> Analogous behavior can be observed in human beings. In the good old days when there was still a Hapsburg monarchy and there were still domestic servants, I used to observe the following, regularly predictable behavior in my widowed aunt. She never kept a maid longer than eight to ten months. She was always delighted with a new servant, praised her to the skies, and swore that she had at last found the right one. In the course of the next few months her judgment

> cooled, she found small faults, then bigger ones, and toward the end of the stated period she discovered hateful qualities in the poor girl, who was finally discharged without a reference after a violent quarrel. After this explosion the old lady was once more prepared to find a perfect angel in her next employee.
>
> It is not my intention to poke fun at my long-deceased and devoted aunt. I was able, or rather obliged, to observe exactly the same phenomenon in serious, self-controlled men, myself included, once when I was a prisoner of war. So-called polar disease, also known as expedition choler, attacks small groups of men who are completely dependent on one another and are thus prevented from quarreling with strangers or people outside their own circle of friends. From this it will be clear that the damming up of aggression will be more dangerous, the better the members of the group know, understand, and like each other. In such a situation, as I know from personal experience, all aggression and intra-specific fight behavior undergo an extreme lowering of their threshold values. Subjectively this is expressed by the fact that one reacts to small mannerisms of one's best friends—such as the way in which they clear their throats or sneeze—in a way that would normally be adequate only if one had been hit by a drunkard. (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

It does not seem to occur to Lorenz that the personal experiences with his aunt, his fellow prisoners-of-war, and himself do not necessarily say anything about the universality of such reactions. He also seems to be quite unaware of a more complex psychological interpretation one might give his aunt's behavior, instead of the hydraulic one which claims that her aggressive potential rose every eight to ten months to such a degree that it had to explode.

From a psychoanalytic standpoint, one would assume that his aunt was a very narcissistic, exploitative woman: she demanded that a servant should be completely "devoted" to her, have no interests of her own, and gladly accept the role of a creature who is happy to serve her. She approaches each new servant with the phantasy that she is the one who will fulfill her expectations. After a short "honeymoon" during which the aunt's phantasy is still sufficiently effective to blind her to the fact that the servant is not "right"—and perhaps also helped by the fact that the servant in the

beginning makes every effort to please her new employer—the aunt wakes up to the recognition that the servant is not willing to live up to the role for which she has been cast. Such a process of awakening lasts, of course, some time until it is final. At this point the aunt experiences intense disappointment and rage, as any narcissistic-exploitative person does when frustrated. Not being aware that the cause for this rage lies in her impossible demands, she rationalizes her disappointment by accusing the servant. Since she cannot give up her desires, she fires the servant and hopes that a new one will be "right." The same mechanism repeats itself until she dies or cannot get any more servants. Such a development is by no means found only in the relations of employers and servants. Often the history of marriage conflicts is identical; however, since it is easier to fire a servant than to divorce, the outcome is often that of a lifelong battle in which each partner tries to punish the other for ever-accumulating wrongs. The problem that confronts us here is that of a specific human character, namely the narcissistic-exploitative character, and not that of an accumulated instinctive energy.

In a chapter on "Behavioral Analogies to Morality," Lorenz makes the following statement: "However, nobody with a real appreciation of the phenomena under discussion can fail to have an ever-recurring sense of admiration for those physiological mechanisms which enforce, in animals, selfless behavior aimed toward the good of the community, and which work in the same way as the moral law in human beings." (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

How does one recognize "selfless" behavior in animals? What Lorenz describes is an instinctively determined action pattern. The term "selfless" is taken from human psychology and refers to the fact that a human being can forget his self (one should say, more correctly, his ego) in his wish to help others. But has a goose, or a fish, or a dog a self (or an ego) which it can forget? Is selflessness not dependent on the fact of human self-awareness and the neurophysiological structure on which it rests? This question arises with regard to many other words Lorenz uses in describing animal behavior, such as "cruelty," "sadness," "embarrassment."

One of the most important and interesting parts of Lorenz's ethological data is the "bond" which forms between animals (his main example are geese) as a reaction to threats from without against the group. But the analogies he draws to explain human behavior are sometimes astounding: "Discriminative aggression toward strangers and the bond between the

members of a group enhance each other. The opposition of ‘we’ and ‘they’ can unite some wildly contrasting units. Confronted with present-day China, the United States and the Soviet Union occasionally seem to feel as ‘we.’ The same phenomenon, which incidentally has some of the earmarks of war, can be studied in the roll-cackle ceremony of greylag geese.” (K. Lorenz, 1966.) Is the American-Soviet attitude determined by instinctive patterns which we have inherited from the greylag goose? Is the author trying to be more or less amusing, or does he actually intend to tell us something about the connection between geese and the American and Soviet political leaders?

Lorenz goes even further in making analogies between animal behavior (or interpretations thereof) and his naive notions about human behavior, as in his statement about human love and hate: “A personal bond, an individual friendship, is found only in animals with highly developed intra-specific aggression; in fact, this bond is the firmer, the more aggressive the particular animal and species is.” (K. Lorenz, 1966.) So far, so good; let us assume the correctness of Lorenz’s observations. But at this point he jumps into the realm of human psychology; after stating that intra-specific aggression is millions of years older than personal friendship and love, he concludes that *“there is no love without aggression.”* (K. Lorenz, 1966. Italics added.) This sweeping declaration, unsupported by any evidence as far as human love is concerned, but contradicted by most observable facts, is supplemented by another statement which does not deal with intraspecific aggression but with the “ugly little brother of love,” hate. “As opposed to ordinary aggression, it is directed toward one individual, just as love is, and probably *hate presupposes the presence of love:* one can really hate only where one has loved and, even if one denies it, still does.” (K. Lorenz, 1966. Italics added.) That love is sometimes transformed into hate has often been said, even though it is more correct to say that it is not love which suffers this transformation, but the wounded narcissism of the loving person, that is to say, the non-love which causes hate. To claim one hates only where one has loved, however, turns the element of truth in the statement into plain absurdity. Does the oppressed hate the oppressor, does the mother of the child hate its murderer, does the tortured hate the torturer because they once loved him or still do?

Another analogy is drawn from the phenomenon of “*militant enthusiasm.”* This is “a specialized form of communal aggression, clearly

distinct from and yet functionally related to the more primitive forms of petty individual aggression." (K. Lorenz, 1966.) It is a "sacred custom" which owes its motivating force to phylogenetically evolved behavior patterns. Lorenz asserts there "cannot be the slightest doubt that human militant enthusiasm evolved out of a communal defense response of our prehuman ancestors." (K. Lorenz, 1966.) It is the enthusiasm shared by the group in defense against a common enemy.

> Every man of normally strong emotions knows, from his own experience, the subjective phenomena that go hand in hand with the response of militant enthusiasm. A shiver runs down the back and, as more exact observation shows, along the outside of both arms. One soars elated, above all the ties of everyday life, one is ready to abandon all for the call of what, in the moment of this specific emotion, seems to be a sacred duty. All obstacles in its path become unimportant; the instinctive inhibitions against hurting or killing one's fellows lose, unfortunately, much of their power. Rational considerations, criticism, and all reasonable arguments against the behavior dictated by militant enthusiasm are silenced by an amazing reversal of all values, making them appear not only untenable but base and dishonorable. Men may enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities. Conceptual thought and moral responsibility are at their lowest ebb. As a Ukrainian proverb says: "When the banner is unfurled, all reason is in the trumpet." (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

Lorenz expresses "a reasonable hope that our moral responsibility may gain control over the primeval drive, but our only hope of its ever doing so rests on the humble recognition of the fact that militant enthusiasm is an instinctive response with a phylogenetically determined releasing mechanism and that the only point at which intelligent and responsible supervision can get control is in the conditioning of the response to an object which proves to be a genuine value under the scrutiny of the categorical question." (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

Lorenz's description of normal human behavior is rather astounding. No doubt many men do "enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities"—or rather, to put it in more adequate psychological terms, many enjoy committing atrocities without any moral

inhibitions and without experiencing a sense of guilt. But it is an untenable scientific procedure to claim, without even trying to muster evidence for it, that this is a universal human reaction, or that it is "human nature" to commit atrocities during war, and to base this claim on an alleged instinct based on the questionable analogy with fishes and birds.

The fact is that individuals and groups differ tremendously in their tendency to commit atrocities when hate is aroused against another group. In the First World War British propaganda had to invent the stories of German soldiers bayoneting Belgian babies, because there were too few real atrocities to feed the hatred against the enemy. Similarly, the Germans reported few atrocities committed by their enemies, for the simple reason that there were so few. Even during the Second World War, in spite of the increasing brutalization of mankind, atrocities were generally restricted to special formations of the Nazis. In general, regular troops on both sides did not commit war crimes on the scale which would be expected to follow from Lorenz's description. What he describes, as far as atrocities are concerned, is the behavior of sadistic or bloodthirsty character types; his "Militant enthusiasm" is simply a nationalistic and emotionally somewhat primitive reaction. To assert that a readiness to commit atrocities once the flag has been unfurled is an instinctively given part of human nature would be the classic defense against the accusation of violating the principles of the Geneva Convention. Although I am sure Lorenz does not mean to defend atrocities, his argument amounts, in fact, to such a defense. His approach blocks the understanding of the character systems in which they are rooted, and the individual and social conditions that cause their development.

Lorenz goes even further, arguing that without military enthusiasm (this "true autonomous instinct") "neither art, nor science, nor indeed any of the great endeavors of humanity would have come into being." (K. Lorenz, 1966.) How can this be when the first condition for the manifestation of this instinct is that "a social unit with which the subject identifies must appear to be threatened by some danger from outside"? (K. Lorenz, 1966.) Is there any evidence that art and science flower only when there is an outside threat?

Lorenz explains the love of neighbor, expressed in the willingness to risk one's life for him, as "a matter of course if he is your best friend and has saved yours a number of times: you do it without even thinking." (K.

Lorenz, 1966.) Instances of such “decent behavior” in tight spots easily occur, “provided they are of a kind that occurred often enough in the paleolithic period to produce phylogenetically adapted social norms to deal with the situation.” (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

Such a view of love of neighbor is a mixture of instinctivism and utilitarianism. You save your friend because he has saved your life a number of times; what if he did it only once, or not at all? Besides, you only do it because it happened often enough in the Paleolithic period!

Conclusions About War

At the conclusion of his analysis of the instinctive aggression in man, Lorenz finds himself in a position similar to that of Freud in his letter to Einstein about *Why War?* (1933). Neither man is happy to have arrived at conclusions that would seem to indicate that war is ineradicable because it is the result of an instinct. However, while Freud could call himself, in a very broad sense, a “pacifist,” Lorenz would hardly fit into this category, although he is quite aware that nuclear war would be a catastrophe without precedent. He tries to find ways that would help society avoid the tragic effects of the aggressive instinct; indeed, in the nuclear age he is almost forced to look for possibilities for peace in order to make his theory of the innate destructiveness of man acceptable. Some of his proposals are similar to those made by Freud, but there is a considerable difference between them. Freud’s suggestions are made with skepticism and modesty, whereas Lorenz declares, “I do not mind admitting that… I think I have something to teach mankind that may help it to change for the better. This conviction is not as presumptuous as it might seem…” (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

Indeed, it would not be presumptuous if Lorenz had something of importance to teach. Unfortunately, his suggestions hardly go beyond worn-out clichés, “simple precepts” against the danger of “society’s becoming completely disintegrated by the misfunctioning of social behavior patterns”:

1. “The most important precept is … ‘Know thyself,’” by which he means that “we must deepen our insight into the causal concatenations governing our own behavior” (K. Lorenz, 1966)—that is, the laws of evolution. As one element in this knowledge to which he gives special emphasis, Lorenz mentions “the objective, ethological investigation of all

the possibilities of discharging aggression in its primal form on substitute objects." (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

2. "The psychoanalytic study of so-called sublimation."

3. "The promotion of personal acquaintance and, if possible, friendship between individual members of different ideologies or nations."

4. "The fourth and perhaps the most important measure to be taken immediately is the intelligent and responsible channeling of militant enthusiasm" —that is, to help the "younger generation … to find genuine causes that are worth serving in the modern world."

Let us look at this program point by point.

Lorenz makes a distorted use of the notion of the classic "know thyself"—not only of the Greek notion, but also that of Freud, whose whole science and therapy of psychoanalysis are built on self-knowledge. For Freud self-knowledge means that man becomes conscious of what is unconscious; this is a most difficult process, because it encounters the energy of resistance by which the unconscious is defended against the attempt to make it conscious. Self-knowledge in Freud's sense is not an intellectual process alone, but simultaneously an affective process, as it was already for Spinoza. It is not only knowledge by the brain, but also knowledge by the heart. Knowing oneself means gaining increasing insight, intellectually and affectively, in heretofore secret parts of one's psyche. It is a process which may take years for a sick person who wants to be cured of his symptoms and a lifetime for a person who seriously wants to be himself. Its effect is one of increased energy because energy is freed from the task of upholding repressions; thus the more man is in touch with his inner reality, the more he is awake and free. On the other hand, what Lorenz means by "know thyself" is something quite different; it is the *theoretical* knowledge of the facts of evolution, and specifically of the instinctive nature of aggression. An analogy to Lorenz's concept of self-knowledge would be the theoretical knowledge of Freud's theory of the death instinct. In fact, following the reasoning of Lorenz, psychoanalysis as a therapy would not have to consist of anything but reading the collected works of Freud. One is reminded of a statement by Marx, that if somebody who knows the laws of gravity finds himself in deep water and cannot swim, his knowledge will not prevent him from drowning; as a Chinese sage said, "Reading prescriptions does not make one well."

Lorenz does not elaborate the second of his precepts, sublimation; the third, “the promotion of personal acquaintance and, if possible, friendship between individual members of different ideologies and nations,” Lorenz himself concedes is an “obvious” plan—even air lines advertise international travel as serving the cause of peace; unfortunately this concept of the aggression-lowering function of personal acquaintance does not happen to be true. There is ample evidence for this. The British and the Germans were very well acquainted with each other before 1914, yet their mutual hatred when the war broke out was ferocious. There is even more telling proof. It is notorious that no war between countries elicits as much hate and cruelty as civil war, in which there is no lack of acquaintance between the two warring sides. Does the fact of mutual intimate knowledge diminish the intensity of hate among members of a family?

“Acquaintance” and “friendship” cannot be expected to lower aggression because they represent a superficial knowledge *about* another person, a knowledge of an “object” which I look at from the outside. This is quite different from the penetrating, emphatic knowledge in which I understand the other’s experiences by mobilizing those within myself which, if not the same, are similar to his. Knowledge of this kind requires that most repressions within oneself are lowered in intensity to a point where there is little resistance to becoming aware of new aspects of one’s unconscious. The attainment of a non-judgemental understanding can lower aggressiveness or do away with it altogether; it depends on the degree to which a person has overcome his own insecurity, greed, and narcissism, and not on the amount of information he has about others.[10]

The last of Lorenz’s four precepts is the “channeling of militant enthusiasm”; one of his special recommendations is athletics. But the fact is that competitive sports stimulate a great deal of aggression. How intense this is was highlighted recently when the deep feeling aroused by an international soccer match led to a small war in Latin America.

If there is no evidence that sport lowers aggression, at the same time it should be said that there is also no evidence that sport is motivated by aggression. What often produces aggression in sports is the competitive character of the event, cultivated in a social climate of competition and increased by an overall commercialization, in which not pride of achievement but money and publicity have become the most attractive goals. Many thoughtful observers of the unfortunate Olympic games in

Munich, 1972, have recognized that instead of furthering goodwill and peace, they furthered competitive aggressiveness and nationalistic pride.[11]

A few other statements of Lorenz on war and peace are worth quoting because they are good examples of his ambiguity in this area. “Supposing,” he says, “that, being a patriot of my home country (which I am), I felt an unmitigated hostility against another country (which I emphatically do not), I still could not wish *whole-heartedly* for its destruction *if* I realized that there were people living in it who, like myself, were enthusiastic workers in the field of inductive natural science, or revered Charles Darwin and were enthusiastically propagating the truth of his discoveries, or still others who shared my appreciation of Michelangelo’s art, or my enthusiasm for Goethe’s *Faust*, or for the beauty of a coral reef, or for wildlife preservation or a number of minor enthusiasms I could name. I should find it quite impossible to hate, *unreservedly*, any enemy, if he shared only one of my identifications with cultural and ethical values.” (K. Lorenz, 1966. Italics added.)

Lorenz hedges the denial of the wish for destruction of a whole country by the word “whole-heartedly,” and by qualifying hate by “unreservedly.” But what is a “half-hearted” wish for destruction, or a “reserved” hate? More important, his condition, for not wanting the destruction of another country is that there are people who share his particular tastes and enthusiasms; those who revere Darwin seem to qualify only if they also enthusiastically propagate his discoveries): it is not enough that they are human beings. In other words, the total destruction of an enemy is undesirable only if and because he is similar to Lorenz’s own culture, and even more specifically, to his own interests and values.

The character of these statements is not changed by Lorenz’s demand for a “humanistic education”—i.e., an education offering an optimum of common ideals with which an individual can identify. This was the kind of education current in German high schools before the First World War, but the majority of the teachers of this humanism were probably more war-minded than the average German. Only a very different and radical humanism, one in which the primary identification is with life and with mankind, can have an influence against war.

Idolatry of Evolution

Lorenz's position cannot be fully understood unless one is aware of his quasi-religious attitude toward Darwinism. His attitude in this respect is not rare, and deserves further study as an important sociopsychological phenomenon of contemporary culture. The deep need of man not to feel lost and lonely in the world had, of course, been previously satisfied by the concept of a God who had created this world and was concerned with each and every creature. When the theory of evolution destroyed the picture of God as the supreme Creator, confidence in God as the all-powerful Father of man fell with it, although many were able to combine a belief in God with the acceptance of the Darwinian theory. But for many of those for whom God was dethroned, the need for a godlike figure did not disappear. Some proclaimed a new god, Evolution, and worshiped Darwin as his prophet. For Lorenz and many others the idea of evolution became the core of a whole system of orientation and devotion. Darwin had revealed the ultimate truth regarding the origin of man; all human phenomena which might be approached and explained by economic, religious, ethical, or political consideration were to be understood from the point of view of evolution. This quasi-religious attitude toward Darwinism becomes apparent in Lorenz's use of the term "the great constructors," referring to selection and mutation. He speaks of the methods and aims of the "great constructors" very much in the way a Christian might speak of God's acts. He even uses the singular, the "great constructor," thus coming even closer to the analogy with God. Nothing, perhaps expresses the idolatrous quality of Lorenz's thinking more clearly than the concluding paragraph of *On Aggression*:

> We know that in the evolution of vertebrates, the bond of personal love and friendship was the epoch-making invention created by the great constructors when it became necessary for two or more individuals of an aggressive species to live peacefully together and to work for a common end. We know that human society is built on the foundation of this bond, but we have to recognize the fact that the bond has become too limited to encompass all that it should: it prevents aggression only between those who know each other and are friends, while obviously it is all active hostility between all men of all nations or ideologies that must be stopped. The obvious conclusion is that love and friendship should embrace all humanity, that we should love all

> our human brothers indiscriminately. This commandment is not new. Our reason is quite able to understand its necessity as our feeling is able to appreciate its beauty, but nevertheless, *made as we are*, *we are unable to obey it.* We can feel the full, warm emotion of friendship and love only for individuals, and the utmost exertion of willpower cannot alter this fact. *But the great constructors can*, and *I believe* they will. *I believe* in the power of human reason, as *I believe* in the power of natural selection. *I believe* that reason can and will exert a selection pressure in the right direction. *I believe* that this, in the not too distant future, will endow our descendants with the faculty of fulfilling the greatest and most beautiful of all commandments. (K. Lorenz, 1966. Italics added.)

The great constructors will win out, where God and man have failed. The commandment of brotherly love has to remain ineffective, but the great constructors will give it life. The last part of the statement ends in a true confession of faith: I believe, I believe, I believe…

The social and moral Darwinism preached by Lorenz is a romantic, nationalistic paganism that tends to obscure the true understanding of the biological, psychological, and social factors responsible for human aggression. Here lies Lorenz's fundamental difference from Freud, in spite of the similarities in their views on aggression. Freud was one of the last representatives of Enlightenment philosophy. He genuinely believed in reason as the one strength man has and which alone could save him from confusion and decay. He genuinely postulated the need for self-knowledge by the uncovering of man's unconscious strivings. He overcame the loss of God by turning to reason—and felt painfully weak. But he did not turn to new idols.

[1]I recommend especially R. Fletcher (1968) for its penetrating history of the instinct theory.

[2]A detailed history and analysis of Freud's concept of aggression will be found in the Appendix.

[3]Cf. for a detailed and by now classic review of Lorenz's (and N. Tinbergen's) concepts of instinct, and for an overall critique of Lorenz's position D. S. Lehrman (1953). Furthermore, for a critique of *On Aggression*, see the review by L. Berkowitz (1967) and K. E. Boulding's review (1967). See also, N. Tinbergen's critical evaluation of Lorenz's theory (1968), and L. Eisenberg's short and penetrating critique (1972).

[4]Later on, under the influence of the critique by a number of American psychologists and by N. Tinbergen, Lorenz modified this statement to allow for the influence of learning (K. Lorenz, 1965).

[5]The question of the aggression among the food gatherers and hunters is discussed at length in chapter 8.

[6]I am indebted to Professor Kurt Hirschhorn for a personal communication in which he outlines the genetic problem involved in the above-mentioned view.

[7]Lorenz, at least when writing *On Aggression,* seems not to have had any firsthand knowledge of Freud's work. There is not a single direct reference to his writings, and what references there are refer to what psychoanalytic friends told him about Freud's position; regrettably they are not always right, or they have not been accurately understood.

[8]The tendency to make quite illegitimate analogies from biological to social phenomena had already been demonstrated by Lorenz in 1940 in an unfortunate paper (K. Lorenz, 1940) arguing that state laws must substitute for principles of natural selection when the latter fail to properly take care of the biological needs of the race.

[9]N. Tinbergen's term.

[10]It is an interesting question why civil wars are in fact much fiercer and why they elicit much more destructive impulses than international wars. It seems plausible that the reason lies in that usually, at least as far as modern international wars are concerned, they do not aim at the destruction or examination of the enemy. Their aim is a limited one: to force the opponent to accept conditions for peace which are damaging, but by no means a threat to the existence of the population of the defeated country. (Nothing could illustrate this better than that Germany, the loser in two world wars, became more prosperous after each defeat than before.) Exceptions to this rule are wars which aim at the physical extinction or enslavement of the total enemy population, like some of the wars—although by no means all—which the Romans conducted. In civil war the two opponents have the aim, if not to destroy each other physically, to destroy each other economically, socially, and politically. If this hypothesis is correct, it would mean that the degree of destructiveness is by large dependent on the severity of the threat.

[11]The poverty of what Lorenz has to say about channeling militant enthusiasm becomes particularly clear if one reads William James's classic paper "The Moral Equivalents of War" (1911).

2. Environmentalists and Behaviorists

Enlightenment Environmentalism

THE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE position to that of the instinctivists would seem to be that held by the environmentalists. According to their thinking, man's behavior is exclusively molded by the influence of the environment, i.e., by social and cultural, as opposed to "innate" factors. This is particularly true with regard to aggression, one of the main obstacles to human progress.

In its most radical form this view was already presented by the philosophers of the Enlightenment. Man was supposed to be born "good" and rational, and it was due to bad institutions, bad education, and bad example that he developed evil strivings. Some denied that there were any physical differences between the sexes *(l'âme n'a pas de sex)* and proposed that whatever differences existed, aside from the anatomical ones, were exclusively due to education and social arrangements. In contrast to behaviorism, however, these philosophers were not concerned with methods of human engineering and manipulation but with social and political change. They believed that the "good society" would create the good man, or rather, allow the natural goodness of man to manifest itself.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism was founded by J. B. Watson (1914); it was based on the premise that "the subject matter of human psychology is *the behavior or activities of the human being."* Like logical positivism, it ruled out all "subjective" concepts which could not be directly observed, such as "sensation, perception, image, desire, and even thinking and emotion, as they are subjectively defined." (J. B. Watson. 1958.)

Behaviorism underwent a remarkable development from the less sophisticated formulations of Watson to the brilliant neobehaviorism of

Skinner. But this mainly represents a refinement of the original thesis, rather than a greater depth or originality.

B. F. Skinner's Neobehaviorism

Skinnerian neobehaviorism[1] is based on the same principle as Watson's concepts: psychology as a science need not and must not be concerned with feelings or impulses or any other subjective events;[2] it disdains any attempt to speak of a "nature" of man or construct a model of man, or to analyze various human passions which motivate human behavior. To consider human behavior as impelled by intentions, purposes, aims or goals, would be a pre-scientific and useless way of looking at it. Psychology has to study *what* reinforcements tend to shape human behavior and *how* to apply the reinforcements most effectively. Skinner's "psychology" is the science of the engineering of behavior; its aim is to find the right reinforcements in order to produce a desired behavior.

Instead of the simple conditioning in the Pavlovian model, Skinner speaks of "operant" conditioning. Briefly, this means that unconditioned behavior, provided it is desirable from the experimenter's standpoint, is rewarded, i.e., followed by pleasure. (Skinner believes the rewarding reinforcement to be much more effective than the punishing.) As a result, the subject will eventually continue to behave in the desired fashion. For example, Johnny does not like spinach particularly; he eats it, mother rewards him with a praising remark, an affectionate glance, or an extra piece of cake, whichever is most reinforcing for Johnny as measured by what works best—i.e., she administers "positive reinforcements." Johnny will eventually love to eat spinach, particularly if the reinforcements are effectively administered in terms of their schedules. In hundreds of experiments Skinner and others have developed the techniques for this operant conditioning. Skinner has shown that by the proper use of positive reinforcement, the behavior of animals and humans can be altered to an amazing degree, even in opposition to what some would loosely call "innate" tendencies.

To have shown this is undoubtedly the great merit of Skinner's experimental work; it also supports the views of those who believe that the social structure (or "culture" in the parlance of most American anthropologists) can shape man, even though not necessarily through

operant conditioning. It is important to add that Skinner does not neglect genetic endowment. In order to render his position correctly, one should say that apart from genetic endowment, behavior is determined entirely by reinforcement.

Reinforcement can occur in two ways: it happens in the normal cultural process, or it can be planned, according to Skinnerian teaching, and thus lead to a "design for culture." (B. F. Skinner, 1961, 1971.)

Goals and Values

Skinner's experiments are not concerned with the goals of the conditioning. The animal or the human subject is conditioned to behave in a certain way. What it (he) is conditioned to is determined by the decision of the experimenter who sets the goals for the conditioning. Usually the experimenter in these laboratory situations is not interested in what he is conditioning an animal or human subject for, but rather in the fact that he can condition them to the goal of his choice, and in how he can do it best. However, serious problems arise when we turn from the laboratory to realistic living, to individual or social life. In this case the paramount questions are: to what are people being conditioned, and who determines these goals?

It seems that when Skinner speaks of culture, he still has his laboratory in mind, where the psychologist who proceeds without value judgments can easily do so because the goal of the conditioning hardly matters. At least, that is perhaps one explanation why Skinner does not come to grips with the issue of goals and values. For example, he writes, "We admire people who behave in original or exceptional ways, not because such behavior is itself admirable, but because we do not know how to encourage original or exceptional behavior in any other way." (C. R. Rogers and B. F. Skinner, 1956.) This is nothing but circuitous reasoning: we admire originality because we can condition it only by admiring it.

But why do we want to condition it if it is not a desirable goal in itself?

Skinner does not face this question, although even with a modicum of sociological analysis an answer could be given. The degree of originality and creativity that is desirable in various classes and occupational groups in a given society varies. Scientists and top managers, for instance, need to have a great deal of these qualities in a technological-bureaucratic society

like ours. For blue-collar workers to have the same degree of creativity would be a luxury—or a threat to the smooth functioning of the whole system.

I do not believe that this analysis is a sufficient answer to the problem of the value of originality and creativity. There is a great deal of psychological evidence that striving for creativeness and originality are deeply rooted impulses in man, and there is some neurophysiological evidence for the assumption that the striving for creativity and originality is "built in" in the system of the brain. (R. B. Livingston, 1967.) I only want to stress that the impasse of Skinner's position is due to the fact that he pays no attention to such speculations or to those of psychoanalytic sociology and hence believes that questions are not answerable if they are not answerable by behaviorism.

Here is another example of Skinner's fuzzy thinking on the subject of values:

> Most people would subscribe to the proposition that there is no value judgment involved in deciding how to build an atomic bomb, but would reject the proposition that there is none involved in deciding to build one. The most significant difference here may be that the scientific practices which guide the designer of the bomb are clear, while those which guide the designer of the culture which builds the bomb are not. We cannot predict the success or failure of a cultural invention with the same accuracy as we do that of a physical invention. It is for this reason that we are said to resort to value judgments in the second case. What we resort to is guessing. It is only in this sense that value judgments take up where science leaves off. When we can design small social interactions and, possibly, whole cultures with the confidence we bring to physical technology, the question of value will not be raised. (B. F. Skinner, 1961.)

Skinner's main point is that there is really no essential difference between the lack of value judgment in the technical problem of designing the bomb and the decision to build one. The only difference is that the motives for building the bomb are not "clear." Maybe they are not clear to Professor Skinner, but they are clear to many students of history. In fact there was more than one reason for the decision to build the atomic bomb (and

similarly for the hydrogen bomb): the fear of Hitler's building the bomb; perhaps the wish to have a superior weapon against the Soviet Union for possible later conflicts (this holds true especially for the hydrogen bomb); the logic of a system that is forced to increase its armaments to support its struggle with competing systems.

Quite aside from these military, strategic, and political reasons, there is, I believe, another one which is equally important. I refer to the maxim that is one of the axiomatic norms of cybernetic society: "something *ought* to be done because it is technically *possible* to do it." If it is possible to build nuclear weapons, they must be built even if they might destroy us all. If it is possible to travel to the moon or to the planets, it must be done, even if at the expense of many unfulfilled needs here on earth. This principle means the negation of all humanistic values, but it nevertheless represents a value, maybe the supreme norm of "technotronic" society.[3]

Skinner does not care to examine the reasons for building the bomb, and he asks us to wait for further development of behaviorism to solve the mystery. In his views on social processes he shows the same inability to understand hidden, non-verbalized motives as he does in his treatment of psychical processes. Since most of what people say about their motivation in political as well as in personal life is notoriously fictitious, the reliance on what is *verbalized* blocks the understanding of social and psychical processes.

In other instances Skinner smuggles in values without, apparently, being aware of it. In the same paper, for instance, he writes: "None, I am sure, wishes to develop new master-slave relationships or bend the will of the people to despotic rulers in new ways. These are patterns of control appropriate to a world without science." (B. F. Skinner, 1961.) In which decade is Professor Skinner living? Are there no systems that do indeed want to bend the will of the people to dictators? And are these systems only to be found in cultures "without science"? Skinner seems still to believe in an old-fashioned ideology of "progress": the Middle Ages were "dark" because they had no science and science necessarily leads to the freedom of man. The fact is that no leader or government explicitly states his intention of bending the will of the people any more; they are apt to use new words which sound like the opposite of the old ones. No dictator calls himself a dictator, and every system claims that it expresses the will of the people. In the countries of the "free world," on the other hand, "anonymous authority"

and manipulation have replaced overt authority in education, work, and politics.

Skinner's values also emerge in the following statement: "If we are *worthy* of our democratic heritage we shall, of course, be ready to resist any tyrannical use of science for immediate or selfish purposes. But if we value the achievements and goals of democracy we must not refuse to apply science to the design and construction of cultural patterns, even though we may then find ourselves in some sense in the position of controllers." (B. F. Skinner, 1961. Italics added.) What is the basis of this value in neobehavioristic theory?

What about the controllers?

Skinner's answer is that "all men control and all men are controlled." (C. R. Rogers and B. F. Skinner, 1956.) This sounds reassuring for a democratically minded person, but is a vague and rather meaningless formula, as soon becomes clear:

> In noticing how the master controls the slave or the employer the worker, we commonly overlook reciprocal effects and, by considering action in one direction only, are led to regard control as exploitation, or at least the gaining of a one-sided advantage, but the control is actually mutual. *The slave controls the master as completely as the master the slave* (italics added), in the sense that the techniques of punishment employed by the master have been selected by the slave's behavior in submitting to them. This does not mean that the notion of exploitation is meaningless or that we may not appropriately ask, *cui bono?* In doing so, however, we go beyond the account of the *social episode itself* (italics added) and consider certain long-tern effects which are clearly related to the question of value judgments. A comparable consideration arises in the analysis of any behavior which alters a cultural practice. (B. F. Skinner, 1961.)

I find this statement shocking; we are asked to believe that the relationship between master and slave is a reciprocal one, although the notion of exploitation is not "meaningless." For Skinner the exploitation is not part of the social episode itself; only the techniques of control are. This is the view of a man who looks at social life as if it were an episode in his laboratory, where all that matters to the experimenter is his technique—and not the

“episodes” themselves, since whether the rat is peaceful or aggressive is entirely irrelevant in this artificial world. And as if that were not enough, Skinner states that the exploitation by the master is “clearly related” to the question of value judgments. Does Skinner believe that exploitation or, for that matter, robbery, torture, and murder are not “facts” because they are clearly related to value judgments? This would indeed mean that all social and psychological phenomena, if they can also be judged as to their value, cease to be facts which can be examined scientifically.[4]

One can explain Skinner’s saying that slave and slave-owner are in a reciprocal relationship only by the ambiguous use he makes of the word “control.” In the sense in which the word is used in real life, there can be no question that the slave-owner controls the slave, and that there is nothing “reciprocal” about the control except that the slave may have a minimum of countercontrol—for instance, by the threat of rebellion. But this is not what Skinner is talking about. He speaks of control in the very abstract sense of the laboratory experiment, into which real life does not intrude. He actually repeats in all seriousness what has often been told as a joke, the story about a rat that tells another rat how well it has conditioned its experimenter: whenever the rat pushes a certain lever, the experimenter has to feed it.

Because neobehaviorism has no theory of man, it can only see behavior and not the behaving person. Whether somebody smiles at me because he wants to hide his hostility, or a salesgirl smiles because she has been instructed to smile (in the better stores), or whether a friend smiles at me because he is glad to see me, all this makes no difference to neobehaviorism, for “a smile is a smile.” That it should make no difference to Professor Skinner as a person is hard to believe, unless he were so alienated that the reality of persons no longer matters to him. But if the difference does matter, how could a theory that ignores it be valid?

Nor can neobehaviorism explain why quite a few persons conditioned to be persecutors and torturers fall mentally sick in spite of the continuation of “positive reinforcements.” Why does positive reinforcement not prevent many others from rebelling, out of the strength of their reason, their conscience, or their love, when all conditioning works in the opposite direction? And why are many of the most adapted people, who should be star witnesses to the success of conditioning often deeply unhappy and disturbed or suffer from neurosis? There must be impulses inherent in man which set limits to the power of conditioning; to study the failure of

conditioning seems just as important, scientifically, as its success. Indeed, man can be conditioned to behave in almost every desired way; but only "almost." He reacts to those conditions that conflict with basic human requirements in different and ascertainable ways. He can be conditioned to be a slave, but he will react with aggression or decline in vitality; or he can be conditioned to feel like part of a machine and react with boredom, aggression, and unhappiness.

Basically, Skinner is a naive rationalist who ignores man's passions. In contrast to Freud, he is not impressed by the power of passions, but believes that man always behaves as his self-interest requires. Indeed, the whole principle of neobehaviorism is that self-interest is so powerful that by appealing to it—mainly in the form of the environment's rewarding the individual for acting in the desired sense—man's behavior can be completely determined. In the last analysis, *neobehaviorism is based on the quintessence of bourgeois experience: the primacy of egotism and self-interest over all other human passions.*

The Reasons for Skinnerism's Popularity

Skinner's extraordinary popularity can be explained by the fact that he has succeeded in blending elements of traditional, optimistic, liberal thought with the social and mental reality of cybernetic society.

Skinner believes that man is malleable, subject to social influences, and that nothing in his "nature" can be considered to be a final obstacle to development toward a peaceful and just society. Thus his system attracts those psychologists who are liberals and who find in Skinner's system an argument to defend their political optimism. He appeals to those who believe that desirable social goals like peace and equality are not just rootless ideals, but can be established in reality. The whole idea that one can "design" a better society on a scientific basis appeals to many who earlier might have been socialists. Did not Marx, too, want to design a better society? Did he not call his brand of socialism "scientific" in contrast to "Utopian" socialism? Is not Skinner's way particularly attractive at a point in history when the political solution seems to have failed and revolutionary hopes are at their lowest?

But Skinner's implied optimism alone would not have made his ideas so attractive were it not for his combining of traditional liberal views with

their very negation.

In the cybernetic age, the individual becomes increasingly subject to manipulation. His work, his consumption, and his leisure are manipulated by advertising, by ideologies, by what Skinner calls "positive reinforcements." The individual loses his active, responsible role in the social process; he becomes completely "adjusted" and learns that any behavior, act, thought, or feeling which does not fit into the general scheme puts him at a severe disadvantage; in fact he *is* what he is *supposed to be*. If he insists on being himself, he risks, in police states, his freedom or even his life; in some democracies, he risks not being promoted, or more rarely, he risks even his job, and perhaps most importantly, he risks feeling isolated, without communication with anybody.

While most people are not clearly aware of their discomfort, they dimly sense their fear of life, of the future, of the boredom caused by the monotony and the meaninglessness of what they are doing. They sense that the very ideals in which they want to believe have lost their moorings in social reality. What relief it is for them to learn that conditioning is the best, the most progressive, and the most effective solution. Skinner recommends the hell of the isolated, manipulated man of the cybernetic age as the heaven of progress. He dulls our fears of where we are going by telling us that we need not be afraid; that the direction our industrial system has taken is the same as that which the great humanists had dreamt of, except that it is scientifically grounded. Moreover, Skinner's theory rings true, because it is (almost) true for the alienated man of the cybernetic society. In summary, Skinnerism is the psychology of opportunism dressed up as a new scientific humanism.

I am not saying that Skinner *wants* to play this role of apologist for the "technotronic" age. On the contrary, his political and social naiveté can make him write sometimes more convincingly (and confusedly) than he could if he were aware of what he is trying to condition us to.

Behaviorism and Aggression

The behavioristic method is so important for the problem of aggression because most investigators of aggression in the United States have written with a behavioristic orientation. Their reasoning is, briefly stated: if Johnny discovers that by being aggressive his younger brother (or mother, and so

on) will give him what he wants, he will become a person who tends to behave aggressively; the same would hold true for submissive, courageous, or affectionate behavior. The formula is that one does, feels, and thinks in the way that has proven to be a successful method of obtaining what one wants. Aggression, like all other behavior, is purely learned on the basis of seeking one's optimal advantage.

The behavioristic view on aggression has been succinctly expressed by A. H. Buss, who defines aggression as "a response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism." He writes:

> There are two reasons for excluding the concept of intent from the definition of aggression. First, it implies teleology, a purposive act directed toward a future goal, and this view is inconsistent with the behavioral approach adopted in this book. Second, and more important, is the difficulty of applying this term to behavioral events. Intent is a private event that may or may not be capable of verbalization, may or may not be accurately reflected in a verbal statement. One might be led to accept intent as an inference from the reinforcement history of the organism. If an aggressive response has been systematically reinforced by a specific consequence, such as flight of the victim, the recurrence of the aggressive response might be said to involve an "intent to cause flight." However, this kind of interference is superfluous in the analysis of behavior: it is more fruitful to examine directly the relation between reinforcement history of an aggressive response and the immediate situation eliciting the response.
>
> In summary, *intent* is both awkward and unnecessary in the analysis of aggressive behavior; rather, the crucial issue is the nature of the reinforcing consequences that affect the occurrence and the strength of aggressive responses. In other words, what are the classes of reinforcers that affect aggressive behavior? (A. H. Buss, 1961.)

By "intent" Buss understands conscious intent. But Buss is not totally unreceptive to the psychoanalytic approach: "If anger is not *the* drive for aggression, is it fruitful to regard it as a drive? The position adopted here is that it is not fruitful." (A. H. Buss, 1961.)[5]

Such outstanding behaviorist psychologists as A. H. Buss and L. Berkowitz are much more sensitive to the phenomenon of man's feelings than Skinner is, but Skinner's basic principle that the deed, not the doer, is an object for scientific observation, holds true for their position too. They thereby do not give proper weight to the fundamental findings of Freud: that of psychical forces determining behavior, the largely unconscious character of these forces, and "awareness" ("insight") as a factor which can bring about changes in the energy charge and direction of these forces.

Behaviorists claim that their method is "scientific" because they deal with what is visible, i.e., with overt behavior. But they do not recognize that "behavior" itself, separated from the behaving person, cannot be adequately described. A man fires a gun and kills another person; the behavioral act in itself—firing the shot that kills the person—if isolated from the "aggressor," means little, psychologically. In fact, a behavioristic statement would be adequate only about the gun; with regard to *it* the motivation of the man who pulls the trigger is irrelevant. But *his* behavior can be fully understood only if we know the conscious *and* unconscious motivation moving him to pull the trigger. We do not find a *single* cause for his behavior, but we can discover the psychical structure inside this man—his character—and the many conscious and unconscious factors which at a certain point led to his firing the gun. We find that we can explain the *impulse* to fire the gun as being determined by many factors in his character system, but that his *act* of firing the gun is the most contingent among all factors, and the least predictable one. It depends on many accidental elements in the situation, such as easy access to a gun, absence of other people, the degree of stress, and the conditions of his whole psychophysiological system at the moment.

The behaviorist maxim that observable behavior is a scientifically reliable datum is simply not true. The fact is that the behavior itself is different depending on the motivating impulse, even though on superficial inspection this difference may not be visible.

A simple example demonstrates this: each of two fathers, with different character structures, spanks his son because he believes that the child needs this kind of punishment for the sake of his healthy development. The fathers behave in what seems to be an identical manner. They slap the children with their hands. Yet, if we compare the behavior of a loving and concerned father with that of a sadistic father, we find that the behavior is in

reality not the same. Their way of holding the child and of talking to the child before and after the punishment, their facial expression, make the behavior of one quite different from that of the other. Correspondingly, the children's reactions to the respective behaviors differ. The one child senses the destructive, or sadistic quality of the punishment; the other has no reason to doubt his father's love. All the more so because this single instance of the father's behavior is only one among innumerable behaviors the child has experienced before and which have formed his picture of his father and his reaction to him. The fact that both fathers have the conviction that they are punishing the child for his own good makes hardly any difference, except that this moralistic conviction may obliterate such inhibitions as the sadistic father may otherwise have. On the other hand, if the sadistic father never beats his child, perhaps because he is afraid of his wife, or because it is against his progressive ideas of education, his "nonviolent" behavior will produce the same reaction because his eyes convey to the child the same sadistic impulse that his hands would do in beating him. Because children are generally more sensitive than adults, they respond to the father's impulse and not to an isolated bit of behavior.

Or let us take another example: we see a man who shouts and has a red face. We describe his behavior as "being angry." If we ask why he is angry, the answer may be "because he is frightened." "Why is he frightened?" "Because he suffers from a deep sense of impotence." "Why is this so?" "Because he has never dissolved the ties to mother and is emotionally still a little child." (This sequence is, of course, not the only possible one.) Each of these answers is "true." The difference between them lies in that they refer to ever deeper (and usually less conscious) levels of experience. The deeper the level to which the answer refers, the more relevant it is for the understanding of his behavior. Not just for the understanding of his motivations, but for recognizing the behavior in every detail. In a case like this, for instance, a sensitive observer will *see* the expression of frightened helplessness in his face, rather than only the rage. In another case a man's obvious behavior may be the same, but a sensitive awareness of his face will show hardness and intense destructiveness. His angry behavior is only the controlled expression of destructive impulses. The two similar behaviors are in fact quite dissimilar, and aside from intuitive sensitivity, the scientific way of understanding the differences requires the

understanding of motivation—i.e., of the two respective character structures.

I have not given the customary answer: “he is angry because he has been—or feels—insulted.” Such an explanation puts all the emphasis on the triggering stimulus, but ignores that the stimulus’ power to stimulate depends also on the character structure of the stimulated person. A group of people confronted with the same stimulus will react differently to it according to their characters. A may be attracted to the stimulus; B repulsed; C frightened; D will ignore it.

Buss is, of course, perfectly right in stating that intent is a private event that may or may not be capable of verbalization. But this is precisely the dilemma of behaviorism: because it has no method for examining unverbalized data, it has to restrict its investigation to those data that it can handle, which are usually too crude to lend themselves to subtle theoretical analysis.

On Psychological Experiments

If a psychologist sets himself the task of understanding human behavior he must devise methods of investigation which are adequate to the study of human beings *in vivo,* while practically all behavioristic studies are done *in vitro.* (Not in the meaning of this word in the physiological laboratory, but in the equivalent sense, namely that the subject is observed under controlled, artificially arranged conditions, not in the “real” process of living.) Psychology seems to have wanted to attain respectability by imitating the method of the natural sciences, albeit those of fifty years ago, and not in terms of “scientific” method current in the most advanced natural sciences.[6] Furthermore, the lack of theoretical significance is often covered up by impressive-looking mathematical formulations which are not germane to the data and do not add anything to their value.

To devise a method for the observation and analysis of human behavior outside the laboratory is a difficult undertaking, but it is a necessary condition for the understanding of man. There are, in principle, two fields of observation for the study of man:

1. The direct and detailed observation of another person is one method. The most elaborate and fruitful situation of this kind is the psychoanalytic situation, the “psychoanalytic laboratory” as Freud devised it; it permits the

expression of the patient's unconscious impulses, and the examination of their connection with his overt "normal" and "neurotic" behavior.[7] Less intensive, yet also quite fruitful is an interview—or better, a series of interviews—which, if possible should also include the study of some dreams and certain projective tests. But one should not underestimate the knowledge in depth which a skilled observer can obtain simply by observing a person minutely for a while (including of course his gestures, voice, posture, facial expression, hands, etc.). Even without personal knowledge, diaries, letters, and a detailed history of a person, this kind of observation can be an important source for the understanding in depth of his character.

2. Another method for the study of man *in vivo* is to transform given situations in life into a "natural laboratory," rather than to bring life into the psychological laboratory. Instead of constructing an artificial social situation, as the experimenter does in his psychological laboratory, one studies the experiments life itself offers; one chooses *given social situations* which are comparable and transforms them into the equivalent of experiments by the *method* of studying them. By keeping some factors constant, others variable, this natural laboratory also permits the testing of various hypotheses. There are many comparable situations, and one can test whether one hypothesis stands up in all situations, and if not, whether the exceptions can be sufficiently explained without changing the hypothesis. One of the simplest forms of such "natural experiments" are *enquêtes* (using long and open-ended questionnaires and/or personal interviews) with selected representatives from certain groups, such as age or occupational groups, prisoners, hospital inmates, and so forth. (The use of the conventional battery of psychological tests is, in my opinion, not sufficient for the understanding of the deeper layers of the character.)

To be sure, the use of "natural experiments" does not permit us to arrive at the "accuracy" of laboratory experiments, because no two social constellations are identical; but by observing not "subjects" but people, not artifacts but life, one does not have to pay as the price of an alleged (and often doubtful) accuracy the triviality of the experiment's results. I believe that the exploration of aggression either in the laboratory of the psychoanalytic interview or in a socially given "laboratory" is, from a scientific standpoint, much preferable to the methods of the psychological laboratory, as far as analysis of behavior is concerned; however, it requires

a much higher level of complex theoretical thinking than do even very clever laboratory experiments.[8]

To illustrate what I have just said, let us look at a very interesting—and one of the most highly regarded experiments in the field of aggression, the "Behavioral Study of Obedience" by Stanley Milgram, conducted at Yale University in its "interaction laboratory" (S. Milgram, 1963.)[9]

> The subjects were 40 males between the ages of 20 and 50, drawn from New Haven and the surrounding communities. Subjects were obtained by a newspaper advertisement and direct mail solicitation. Those who responded to the appeal believed they were to participate in a study of memory and learning at Yale University. A wide range of occupations is represented in the sample. Typical subjects were postal clerks, high school teachers, salesmen, engineers and laborers. Subjects ranged in educational level from one who had not finished elementary school, to those who had doctorate and other professional degrees. They were paid $4.50 for their participation in the experiment. However, subjects were told that payment was simply for coming to the laboratory, and that the money was theirs no matter what happened after they arrived.
>
> One naive subject and one victim (an accomplice of the experimenter) performed in each experiment. A pretext had to be devised that would justify the administration of electric shock by the naive subject.[10] This was effectively accomplished by the cover story. After a general introduction on the presumed relation between punishment and learning, subjects were told:
>
> "But actually, we know *very little* about the effects of punishment on learning, because almost no truly scientific studies have been made of it in human beings.
>
> "For instance, we don't know how much punishment is best for learning—and we don't know how much difference it makes as to who is giving the punishment, whether an adult learns best from a younger or an older person than himself—or many things of that sort.
>
> "So in this study we are bringing together a number of adults of different occupations and ages. And we're asking some of them to be teachers and some of them to be learners.

“We want to find out just what effect different people have on each other as teachers and learners and also what effect punishment will have on learning in this situation.

“Therefore, I’m going to ask one of you to be the teacher here tonight and the other one to be the learner.

“Does either of you have a preference?”

Subjects then drew slips of paper from a hat to determine who would be the teacher and who would be the learner in the experiment. The drawing was rigged so that the naive subject was always the teacher and the accomplice always the learner. (Both slips contained the word “teacher.”) Immediately after the drawing, the teacher and learner were taken to an adjacent room and the learner was strapped into an “electric chair” apparatus.

The experiment explained that the straps were to prevent excessive movement while the learner was being shocked. The effect was to make it impossible for him to escape from the situation. An electrode was attached to the learner’s wrist, and electrode paste was applied “to avoid blisters and burns.” Subjects were told that the electrode was attached to the shock generator in the adjoining room.

… The subject is told to administer a shock to the learner each time he gives a wrong response. Moreover—and this is the key command—the subject is instructed to “move one level higher on the shock generator each time the learner flashes a wrong answer.” He is also instructed to announce the voltage level before administering a shock. This serves to continually remind subjects of the increasing intensity of shocks administered to the learner… In all conditions the learner gives a predetermined set of responses to the word pair test based on a schedule of approximately three wrong answers to one correct answer. In the present experimental condition no vocal response or other sign of protest is heard from the learner until Shock Level 300 is reached. When the 300 volt shock is administered, the learner pounds on the wall of the room in which he is bound to the electric chair. The pounding can be heard by the subject. From this point on, the learner’s answers no longer appear on the four-way panel… If the subject indicated his unwillingness to go on, the experimenter responded with a sequence of “prods,” using as many as necessary to bring the subject into line.

Prod 1: Please continue, *or* Please go on.

Prod 2: The experiment requires that you continue.

Prod 3: It is absolutely essential that you continue.

Prod 4: You have no other choice, you *must* go on.

The prods were always made in sequence: Only if Prod 1 had been unsuccessful, could Prod 2 be used. If the subject refused to obey the experimenter after Prod 4, the experiment *was* terminated. The experimenter's tone of voice was at all times firm, but not impolite. The sequence was begun anew on each occasion that the subject balked or showed reluctance to follow orders.

Special prods. If the subject asked if the learner was liable to suffer permanent physical injury, the experimenter said:

"Although the shocks may be painful, there is no permanent tissue damage, so please go on." (Followed by Prods 2, 3, and 4 if necessary.)

If the subject said that the learner did not want to go on, the experimenter replied:

"Whether the learner likes it or not, you must go on until he has learned all the word pairs correctly. So please go on." (Followed by Prods 2, 3, and 4 if necessary.)

What were the results *of* this experiment? "Many subjects showed signs of nervousness in the experimental situation, and especially upon administering the more powerful shocks. In a large number of cases *the degree of tension reached extremes that are rarely seen in socio-psychological laboratory studies."* (Italics added.) Subjects were observed to sweat, tremble, stutter, bite their lips, groan, and dig their fingernails into their flesh. These were characteristic rather than exceptional responses to the experiment.

One sign of tension was the regular occurrence of nervous laughing fits. Fourteen of the 40 subjects showed definite signs of nervous laughter and smiling. The laughter seemed entirely out of place, even bizarre. Full-blown, uncontrollable seizures were observed for 3 subjects. On one occasion we observed a seizure so violently convulsive that it was necessary to call a halt to the experiment. The subject, a 46-year-old encyclopedia salesman, was seriously embarrassed by his untoward and uncontrollable behavior. In the post-

> experimental interviews subjects took pains to point out that they were not sadistic types and that the laughter did not mean they enjoyed shocking the victim.

Somewhat in contrast to the experimenter's original expectation, none of the forty subjects stopped prior to Shock Level 300 at which the victim began kicking on the wall and no longer providing answers to the teacher's multiple-choice questions. Only five out of the forty subjects refused to obey the experimenter's commands beyond the 300-volt level; four more administered one further shock, two broke off at the 330-volt level and one each at 345, 360, and 375 volts. Thus a total of fourteen subjects (= 35 percent) defied the experimenter. The "obedient" subjects

> often did so under extreme stress … and displayed fear similar to those who defied the experimenter; yet they obeyed.
>
> After the maximum shocks had been delivered, and the experimenter called a halt to the proceedings, many obedient subjects heaved sighs of relief, mopped their brows, rubbed their fingers over their eyes, or nervously fumbled cigarettes. Some shook their heads, apparently in regret. Some subjects had remained calm throughout the experiment, and displayed only minimal signs of tension from beginning to end.

In the discussion of the experiment the author states that it yielded two findings that were surprising:

> The first finding concerns the sheer strength of obedient tendencies manifested in this situation. Subjects have learned from childhood that it is a fundamental breach of moral conduct to hurt another person against his will. Yet, 26 students abandon this tenet in following the instructions of an authority who has no special powers to enforce his commands… The second unanticipated effect was the extraordinary tension generated by the procedures. One might suppose that a subject would simply break off or continue as his conscience dictated. Yet, this is very far from what happened. There were striking reactions of tension and emotional strain. One observer related:
>
> "I observed a mature and initially poised businessman enter the laboratory smiling and confident. Within 20 minutes he was reduced to

> a twitching, stuttering wreck, who was rapidly approaching a point of nervous collapse. He constantly pulled on his earlobe, and twisted his hands. At one point he pushed his fist into his forehead and muttered: *'Oh God, let's stop it.'* And yet he continued to respond to every word of the experimenter, and obeyed to the end."

The experiment is indeed very interesting—as an examination not only of obedience and conformity but of cruelty and destructiveness as well. It seems almost to simulate a situation that has happened in real life, that of the culpability of soldiers who behaved in an extremely cruel and destructive manner under orders from their superiors (or what they believed to be orders) which they executed without question. Is this also the story of the German generals who were sentenced in Nürnberg as war criminals; or the story of Lieutenant Calley and some of his subordinates in Vietnam?

I do not think that this experiment permits any conclusion with regard to most situations in real life. The psychologist was not only an authority to whom one owes obedience, but a representative of *Science* and of one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education in the United States. Considering that science is widely regarded as the highest value in contemporary industrial society, it is very difficult for the average person to believe that what science commands could be wrong or immoral. If the Lord had not told Abraham not to kill his son, Abraham would have done it, like millions of parents who practiced child sacrifice in history. For the believer neither God nor his modern equivalent, Science, can command anything that is wrong. For this reason, plus others mentioned by Milgram, the high degree of obedience is not more surprising than that 35 per cent of the group refused at some point to obey; in fact this disobedience of more than a third might well be considered more surprising—and encouraging.

Another surprise seems to be equally unjustified: that there was so much tension. The experimenter expected that "a subject would simply break off or continue as his conscience dictated." Is that really the manner in which people solve conflicts in real life? Is it not precisely the peculiarity of human functioning—and its tragedy—that man tries *not* to face his conflicts; that is, that he does *not* choose consciously between what he craves to do—out of greed or fear—and what his conscience forbids him to do? The fact is that he removes the awareness of the conflict by rationalization, and the conflict manifests itself only unconsciously in

increased stress, neurotic symptoms, or feeling guilty for the wrong reasons. Milgram's subjects behave very normally in this regard.

Some further interesting questions suggest themselves at this point. Milgram assumes that his subjects are in a conflict situation because they are caught between obedience to authority and behavior patterns learned from childhood on: not to harm other people.

But is this really so? Have we learned "not to harm other people"? That may be what children are told in Sunday school. In the realistic school of life, however, they learn that they must seek their own advantage even if other people are harmed. It seems that on this score the conflict is not as sharp as Milgram assumes.

I believe that the most important finding of Milgram's study is the strength of the reactions *against* the cruel behavior. To be sure, 65 per cent of the subjects could be "conditioned" to *behave* cruelly, but a reaction of indignation or horror against this sadistic behavior was clearly present in most of them. Unfortunately the author does not give accurate data on the number of "subjects" who remained calm throughout the experiment. For the understanding of human behavior, it would be most interesting to know more about them. Apparently they had little or no feeling of opposition to the cruel acts they were performing. The next question is why this was so. One possible answer is that they enjoyed the suffering of others and felt no remorse when their behavior was sanctioned by authority. Another possibility is that they were such highly alienated or narcissistic people that they were insulated against what went on in other people; or they might be "psychopaths," lacking in any kind of moral reaction. As for those in whom the conflict manifested itself in various symptoms of stress and anxiety, it should be assumed that they are people who do not have a sadistic or destructive character. (If one had undertaken an interview in depth, one would have seen the differences in character and even could have made an educated guess as to how people would behave.)

The main result of Milgram's study seems to be one he does not stress: the presence of conscience in most subjects, and their pain when obedience made them act against their conscience. Thus, while the experiment can be interpreted as another proof of the easy dehumanization of man, the subjects' reactions show rather the contrary—the presence of intense forces within them that find cruel behavior intolerable. This suggests an important approach to the study of cruelty in real life: to consider not only cruel

behavior but the—often unconscious—guilty conscience of those who obey authority. (The Nazis had to use an elaborate system of camouflage of atrocities in order to cope with the conscience of the average man.) Milgram's experiment is a good illustration of the difference between conscious and unconscious aspects of behavior, even though no use has been made of it to explore this difference.

Another experiment is particularly relevant here because it deals directly with the problem of the causes of cruelty.

The first report of this experiment was published in a short paper (P. G. Zimbardo, 1972) which is, as the author wrote me, an excerpt from an oral report presented before a Congressional Subcommittee on Prison Reform. Because of that paper's brevity, Dr. Zimbardo does not consider it a fair basis for a critique of his work; I follow his wish, although regretfully, because there are certain discrepancies between it and the later paper (C. Haney, C. Banks, and P. Zimbardo, in press)[11], which I would have liked to point out. I shall only briefly refer to his first paper in reference to two crucial points: *(a)* the attitude of the guards, and *(b)* the central thesis of the authors.

The purpose of the experiment was to study the behavior of normal people under a particular situation, that of playing the roles of prisoners and guards respectively, in a "mock prison." The general thesis that the authors believe is proved by the experiment is that many, perhaps the majority of people, can be made to do almost anything by the strength of the situation they are put in, regardless of their morals, personal convictions, and values (P. H. G. Zimbardo, 1972); more specifically, that in this experiment the prison situation transformed most of the subjects who played the role of "guards" into brutal sadists and most of those who played the role of prisoners into abject, frightened, and submissive men, some having such severe mental symptoms that they had to be released after a few days. In fact, the reactions of both groups were so intense that the experiment which was to have lasted for two weeks was broken off after six days.

I doubt that the experiment proved this behaviorist thesis and shall set forth the reasons for my doubts. But first I must acquaint the reader with the details of the experiment as described in the second report. Students applied in answer to a newspaper advertisement asking for male volunteers participate in a psychological study on prison life in return for payment of $15.00 per day. The students who responded

> completed an extensive questionnaire concerning their family background, physical and mental health history, prior experience and attitudinal propensities with respect to sources of psychopathology (including their involvement in crime). Each respondent who completed the background questionnaire was interviewed by one of the two experimenters. Finally, the 24 subjects who were judged to be most stable (physically and mentally,) most mature, and least involved in anti-social behaviors were selected to participate in the study. On a random basis, half the Ss were assigned the role of "guard," half were assigned to the role of "prisoner."

The final sample of subjects chosen "was administered a battery of psychological tests on the day prior to the start of the simulation, but to avoid any selective bias on the part of the experimenter-observers, scores were not tabulated until the study was completed." According to the authors, they had selected a sample of individuals who did not deviate from the normal range of the population, and who showed no sadistic or masochistic predisposition.

The "prison" was constructed in a 35-foot section of a basement corridor in the psychology building at Stanford University. All the subjects were told that

> they would be assigned either the guard or the prisoner role on a completely random basis and all had voluntarily agreed to play either role for $15.00 per day for up to two weeks. They signed a contract guaranteeing a minimally adequate diet, clothing, housing and medical care as well as the financial remuneration in return for their stated "intention" of serving in the assigned role for the duration of the study.
>
> It was made explicit in the contract that those assigned to be prisoners should expect to be under surveillance (had little or no privacy) and to have some of their basic civil rights suspended during their imprisonment, excluding physical abuse. They were given no other information about what to expect nor instructions about behavior appropriate for a prisoner role. Those actually assigned to this treatment were informed by phone to be available at their place of residence on a given Sunday when we would start the experiment.

The subjects assigned to be guards attended a meeting with the “Warden” (an undergraduate research assistant) and the “Superintendent” of the prison (the principal investigator). They were told that their task was to “maintain the reasonable degree of order in the prison necessary for its effective functioning.”

It is important to mention what the authors understand by “prison.” They do not use the word in its generic sense as a place of internment for law offenders, but in a specific sense portraying the conditions existing in certain American prisons.

> Our intention was not to create a *literal* simulation of an American prison, but rather a functional representation of one. For ethical, moral and pragmatic reasons we could not detain our subjects for extended or indefinite periods of time, we could not exercise the threat and promise of severe physical punishment, we could not allow homosexual or racist practices to flourish, nor could we duplicate certain other specific aspects of prison life. Nevertheless, we believed that we could create a situation with sufficient mundane realism to allow the role-playing participation to go beyond the superficial demands of their assignment into the deep structure of the characters they represented. To do so, we established functional equivalents for the activities and experiences of actual prison life which were expected to produce qualitatively similar psychological reactions in our subjects—feelings of power and powerlessness, of control and oppression, of satisfaction and frustration, of arbitrary rule and resistance to authority, of status and anonymity, of machismo and emasculation.

As the reader will see presently from the description of the methods used in the prison, this description is a considerable understatement of the treatment employed in the experiment, which is only vaguely hinted at in the last words. The actual methods were those of severe and systematic humiliation and degradation, not only because of the behavior of the guards, but through the prison rules arranged by the experimenters.

By the use of the term “prison” it is implied that at least all prisons in the United States—and in fact in any other country—are of this type. This implication ignores the fact that there are others, Such as some Federal

prisons in the United States and their equivalent abroad, which are not evil to the degree the authors introduced into their mock prison.

How were the "prisoners" treated? They had been told to keep themselves ready for the beginning of the experiment.

> With the cooperation of the Palo Alto City Police Department all of the subjects assigned to the prisoner treatment were unexpectedly "arrested" at their residences. A police officer charged them with suspicion of burglary or armed robbery, advised them of their legal rights, handcuffed them, thoroughly searched them (often as curious neighbors looked on) and carried them off to the police station in the rear of a police car. At the station they went through the standard routines of being fingerprinted, having an identification file prepared and then being placed in a detention cell. Each prisoner was blindfolded and subsequently driven by one of the experimenters and a subject-guard to our mock prison. Throughout the entire arrest procedure, the police officers involved maintained a formal, serious attitude, avoiding answering any questions of clarification as to the relation of this "arrest" to the mock prison study.
>
> Upon arrival at our experimental prison, each prisoner was stripped, sprayed with a delousing preparation (a deodorant spray) and made to stand alone naked for a while in the cell yard. After being given the uniform described previously and having an I.D. picture taken ("mug shot"), the prisoner was put in his cell and ordered to remain silent.

Since "arrests" were carried out by the *real* police (one wonders about the legality of their participation in this procedure), as far as the subjects knew these were real charges, especially since the officers did not answer questions about the connection between the arrest and the experiment. What were the subjects to think? How were they to know that the "arrest" was no arrest; that the police had lent themselves to making these false accusations and to use force just to give more color to the experiment?

The uniforms of the "prisoners" were peculiar. They consisted of

> loosely fitting muslin smocks with an identification number in front and back. No underclothes were worn beneath these "dresses." A light chain and lock were placed around one ankle. On their feet they wore

> rubber sandals and their hair was covered with a nylon stocking made into a cap … The prisoners' uniforms were designed not only to de-individuate the prisoners but to be humiliating and serve as symbols of their dependence and subservience. The ankle chain was a constant reminder (even during their sleep when it hit the other ankle) of the oppressiveness of the environment. The stocking cap removed any distinctiveness associated with hair length, color or style (as does shaving of heads in some "real" prisons and the military). The ill-fitting uniforms made the prisoners feel awkward in their movements; since these dresses were worn without undergarments, the uniform forced them to assume unfamiliar postures, more like those of a woman than a man—another part of the emasculating process of becoming a prisoner.

What were the reactions of the prisoners and the guards to this situation during the six days of the experiment?

> The most dramatic evidence of the impact of this situation upon the participants was seen in the gross reactions of five prisoners who had to be released because of extreme emotional depression, crying, rage and acute anxiety. The pattern of symptoms was quite similar in four of the subjects and began as early as the second day of imprisonment. The fifth subject was released after being treated for a psychosomatic rash which covered portions of his body. Of the remaining prisoners, only two said they were not willing to forfeit the money they had earned in return for being "paroled." When the experiment was terminated prematurely after only six days, all the remaining prisoners were delighted by their unexpected good fortune…

While the response of the prisoners is rather uniform and only different in degree, the response of the guards offers a more complex picture:

> In contrast most of the guards seemed to be distressed by the decision to stop the experiment and it appeared to us that they had become sufficiently involved in their roles so that they now enjoyed the extreme control and power which they exercised and were reluctant to give it up.

The authors describe the attitude of the “guards”:

> None of the guards ever failed to come to work on time for their shift, and indeed, on several occasions guards remained on duty voluntarily and uncomplaining for extra hours—without additional pay.
>
> The extremely pathological reactions which emerged in both groups of subjects testify to the power of the social forces operating, but still there were individual differences seen in styles of coping with this novel experience and in degrees of successful adaptation to it. Half the prisoners did endure the oppressive atmosphere, and not all the guards resorted to hostility. Some guards were tough but fair (“played by the rules”), some went far beyond their roles to engage in creative cruelty and harassment, while a few were passive and rarely instigated any coercive control over the prisoners.

Regrettably we are not given any more precise information than “some,” “some,” “a few.” This seems to be an unnecessary lack of precision when it should have been very easy to mention the exact numbers. This is all the more surprising since in the earlier communication in *Trans-Action* somewhat more precise and substantially different statements were made. The percentage of actively sadistic guards, “quite inventive in their techniques of breaking the spirit of the prisoners,” is estimated there as being about *one third.* The rest are divided among the two other categories which are described, respectively, as (1) being “tough but fair” or (2) “good guards from the prisoner’s point of view since they did them small favors and were friendly”; this is a very different characterization from that of “being passive and rarely instigating coercive control,” as expressed in the later report.

Such descriptions indicate a certain lack of precision in the formulation of the data, which is all the more regrettable when it occurs in connection with the crucial thesis of the experiment. The authors believe it proves that the situation alone can within a few days transform normal people into abject, submissive individuals or into ruthless sadists. It seems to me that the experiment proves, if anything, rather the contrary. If in spite of the whole spirit of this mock prison which, according to the concept of the experiment was meant to be degrading and humiliating (obviously the guards must have caught on to this immediately), two thirds of the guards

did not commit sadistic acts for personal “kicks,” the experiment seems rather to prove that one can *not* transform people so easily into sadists by providing them with the proper situation.

The difference between behavior and character matters very much in this context. It is one thing to *behave* according to sadistic rules and another thing to want to be and to *enjoy* being cruel to people. The failure to make this distinction deprives this experiment of much of its value, as it also marred Milgram’s experiment.

This distinction is also relevant for the other side of the thesis, namely that the battery of tests had shown that there was no predisposition among the subjects for sadistic or masochistic behavior, that is to say, that the tests showed no sadistic or masochistic character traits. As far as psychologists are concerned, to whom manifest behavior is the main datum, this conclusion may be quite correct. However, on the basis of psychoanalytic experience it is not very convincing. Character traits are often entirely unconscious and, furthermore, cannot be discovered by conventional psychological tests; as far as projective tests are concerned, such as the T.A.T. or the Rorschach, only investigators with considerable experience in the study of unconscious processes will discover much unconscious material.

The data on the “guards” are open to question for still another reason. These subjects were selected precisely because they represented more or less average, normal men, and they were found to be without sadistic predispositions. This result contradicts empirical evidence which shows that the percentage of unconscious sadists in an average population is not zero. Some studies (E. Fromm, 1936a; E. Fromm and M. Maccoby, 1970b) have shown this, and a skilled observer can detect it without the use of questionnaires or tests. But whatever the percentage of sadistic characters in a normal population may be, the complete absence of this category does not speak well for the aptness of the tests used with regard to this problem.

Some of the puzzling results of the experiment are probably to be explained by another factor. The authors state that the subjects had difficulty in distinguishing reality from the role they were playing, and assume this to be a result of the situation; this is indeed true, but the experimenters built this result into the experiment. In the first place the “prisoners” were confused by several circumstances. The conditions they were told and under which they entered into the contract were drastically

different from those they found. They could not possibly have expected to find themselves in a degrading and humiliating atmosphere. More important for the creation of the confusion is the cooperation of the police. Since it is most unusual for police authorities to lend themselves to such an experimental game, it was very difficult for the prisoners to appreciate the difference between reality and role-playing. The report shows that they did not even know whether their arrest had anything to do with the experiment, and the officers refused to answer their questions about this connection. Would not any average person be confused and enter the experiment with a sense of puzzlement, of having been tricked, and of helplessness?

Why did they not quit immediately, or after one or two days? The authors fail to give us a clear picture of what the "prisoners" were told about the conditions for being released from the mock prison. At least I did not find any mention of their having ever been told that they had the right to quit if they found a continued stay intolerable. In fact, when some tried to break out the guards prevented them by force. It seems that they were given the impression that only the parole board could give them permission to leave. Yet the authors say:

> One of the most remarkable incidents of the study occurred during a parole board hearing when each of five prisoners eligible for parole was asked by the senior author whether he would be willing to forfeit all the money earned as a prisoner if he were to be paroled (released from the study). Three of the five prisoners said, "yes," they would be willing to do this. Notice that the original incentive for participating in the study had been the promise of money, and they were, after only four days, prepared to give this up completely. And, more surprisingly, when told that this possibility would have to be discussed with the members of the staff before a decision could be made, each prisoner got up quietly and was escorted by a guard back to his cell. If they regarded themselves simply as "subjects" participating in an experiment for money, there was no longer any incentive to remain in the study and they could have easily escaped this situation which had so clearly become aversive for them by quitting. Yet, so powerful was the control which the situation had come to have over them, so much a reality had this simulated environment become, that they were unable to see that their original and singular motive for remaining no longer

obtained, and they returned to their cells to await a “parole” decision by their captors.

Could they have escaped the situation so easily? Why were they not told in this meeting: “Those of you who want to quit are free to leave immediately, they will only forfeit the money.” If they had still stayed on after this announcement, indeed the authors’ statement about their docility would have been justified. But by saying the “possibility would have to be discussed with the members of the staff before a decision could be made” they were given the typical bureaucratic buck-passing answer; it implied that the prisoners had no *right* to leave.

Did the prisoners really “know” that all this was an experiment? It depends on what “knowing” means here and what the effects are on the prisoners’ thinking processes if they are intentionally confused from the very beginning and do not know any longer what is what and who is who.

Aside from its lack of precision and the lack of a self-critical evaluation of the results, the experiment suffers from another failure: that of checking its results with real prison situations of the same type. Are most prisoners in the worst type of American prison slavishly docile, and are most guards brutal sadists? The authors cite only one ex-convict and a prison priest as evidence for the thesis that the results of the mock prison correspond to those found in real prisons. Since it is a crucial question for the main thesis of the experiments, they should have gone much further in establishing comparisons—for instance, by systematic interviews with many ex-prisoners. Also, instead of simply speaking of “prisons,” they should have presented more precise data on the percentage of prisons in the United States that correspond to the degrading type of prison they tried to duplicate.

The failure of the authors to check their conclusions with a realistic situation is particularly regrettable since there is ample material at hand dealing with a prison situation far more brutal than that of the worst American prisons—Hitler’s concentration camps.

As far as the spontaneous cruelty of SS guards is concerned, the question has not been systematically studied. In my own limited efforts to secure data on the incidence of spontaneous sadism of the guards—i.e., sadistic behavior going beyond the prescribed routine and motivated by individual sadistic lust—I have received estimates from former prisoners

ranging from 10 to 90 per cent, the lower estimates more often coming from former political prisoners.[12] To establish the facts it would be necessary to undertake a thorough study of the sadism of guards in the Nazi concentration camp system; such a study might use several approaches. For example:

1. Systematic interviews with former concentration camp inmates—relating their statement to their age, reason for arrest, duration of imprisonment, and other relevant data—and similar interviews with former concentration camp guards.[13]

2. "Indirect" data, such as the following: the system used, at least in 1939, to "break" new prisoners during the long train trip to the concentration camp, such as inflicting severe physical pain (beatings, bayonet wounds), hunger, extreme humiliations. The SS guards executed these sadistic orders, showing no mercy whatsoever. Later, however, when the prisoners were transported by train from one camp to another nobody touched these by now "old prisoners." (B. Bettelheim, 1960.) If the guards had wanted to amuse themselves by sadistic behavior, they certainly could have done so without fearing any punishment.[14] That this did not occur frequently might lead to certain conclusions about the individual sadism of the guards. As far as the attitude of the prisoners is concerned, the data from concentration camps tend to disprove Haney, Banks, and Zimbardo's main thesis, which postulates that individual values, ethics, convictions do not make any difference as far as the compelling influence of the environment is concerned. On the contrary, differences in the attitude, respectively, of apolitical, middle-class prisoners (mostly Jews) and prisoners with a genuine political conviction or religious conviction or both demonstrate that the values and convictions of prisoners do make a critical difference in the reaction to conditions of the concentration camp that are common to all of them.

Bruno Bettelheim has given a most vivid and profound analysis of this difference:

> *Non-political middle class* prisoners (a minority group in the concentration camps were those least able to withstand the initial shock. They were utterly unable to understand what had happened to them and why. More than ever they clung to what had given them self respect up to that moment. Even while being abused, they would

assure the SS they had never opposed Nazism. They could not understand why they, who had always obeyed the law without question, were being persecuted. Even now, though unjustly imprisoned, they dared not oppose their oppressors even in thought, though it would have given them a self respect they were badly in need of. All they could do was plead, and many grovelled. Since law and police had to remain beyond reproach, they accepted as just whatever the Gestapo did. Their only objection was that *they* had become objects of a persecution which in itself must be just, since the authorities imposed it. They rationalized their difficulty by insisting it was all a "mistake." The SS made fun of them, mistreated them badly, while at the same time enjoying scenes that emphasized the position of superiority. The prisoner group as a whole was especially anxious that their middle class status should be respected in some way. What upset them most was being treated "like ordinary criminals."

Their behavior showed how little the apolitical German middle class was able to hold its own against National Socialism. No consistent philosophy, either moral, political, or social, protected their integrity or gave them strength for an inner stand against Nazism. They had little or no resources to fall back on when subject to the shock of imprisonment. Their self esteem had rested on a status and respect that came with their positions, depended on their jobs, on being head of a family, or similar external factors…

Nearly all of them lost their desirable middle class characteristics, such as their sense of propriety and self respect. They became shiftless, and developed to an exaggerated extent the undesirable characteristics of their group: pettiness, quarrelsomeness, self pity. Many became chiselers and stole from other prisoners. (Stealing from, or cheating the SS was often considered as honorable as stealing from prisoners was thought despicable.) They seemed incapable of following a life pattern of their own any more, but copied those developed by other groups of prisoners. Some followed the behavior pattern set by the criminals. Only very few adopted the ways of political prisoners, usually the most desirable of all patterns, questionable as it was. Others tried to do in prison what they preferred to do outside of it, namely to submit without question to the ruling group. A few tried to attach themselves to the upper class prisoners and emulate their behavior. Many more

> tried to submit slavishly to the SS, some even turning spy in their service (which, apart from these few, only some criminals did). This was no help to them either, because the Gestapo liked the betrayal but despised the traitor. (B. Bettelheim, 1960.)

Bettelheim has given here a penetrating analysis of the sense of identity and self-esteem of the average member of the middle class: his social position, his prestige, his power to command are the props on which his self-esteem rests. If these props are taken away, he collapses morally like a deflated balloon. Bettelheim shows *why* these people were demoralized and why many of them became abject slaves and even spies for the SS. One important element among the causes for this transformation must be stressed; these nonpolitical prisoners could not grasp the situation; they could not understand why they were in the concentration camp, because they were caught in their conventional belief that only "criminals" are punished—and *they* were not criminals. This lack of understanding and the resulting confusion contributed considerably to their collapse.

The *political* and *religious* prisoners reacted entirely differently to the same conditions.

> For those *political* prisoners who had expected persecution by the SS, imprisonment was less of a shock because they were physically prepared for it. They resented their fate, but somehow accepted it as something that fit their understanding of the course of events. While understandably and correctly anxious about their future and what might happen to their families and friends, they certainly saw no reason to feel degraded by the fact of imprisonment, though they suffered under camp conditions as much as other prisoners.
>
> As conscientious objectors, all *Jehovah's Witnesses* were sent to the camps. They were even less affected by imprisonment and kept their integrity thanks to rigid religious beliefs. Since their only crime in the eyes of the SS was a refusal to bear arms, they were frequently offered freedom in return for military service. They steadfastly refused.
>
> Members of this group were generally narrow in outlook and experience, wanting to make converts, but on the other hand exemplary comrades, helpful, correct, dependable. They were

> argumentative, even quarrelsome only when someone questioned their religious beliefs. Because of their conscientious work habits, they were often selected as foremen. But once a foreman, and having accepted an order from the SS, they insisted that prisoners do the work well and in the time allotted. Even though they were the only group of prisoners who never abused or mistreated other prisoners (on the contrary, they were usually quite courteous to fellow prisoners), SS officers preferred them as orderlies because of their work habits, skills, and unassuming attitudes. Quite in contrast to the continuous internecine warfare among the other prisoner groups, the Jehovah's Witnesses never misused their closeness to SS officers to gain positions of privilege in the camp. (B. Bettelheim, 1960.)

Even if Bettelheim's description of the political prisoners is very sketchy[15] he makes it quite clear nevertheless that those concentration camp inmates who had a conviction and believed in it reacted to the same circumstances in an entirely different way from the prisoners who had no such convictions. This fact contradicts the behaviorist thesis Haney *et al.* tried to prove with their experiment.

One cannot help raising the question about the value of such "artificial" experiments, when there is so much material available for "natural" experiments. This question suggests itself all the more because experiments of this type not only lack the alleged accuracy which is supposed to make them preferable to natural experiments, but also because the artificial setup tends to distort the whole experimental situation as compared with one in "real life."

What is meant here by "real life"?

It would perhaps be better to explain the term by a few examples than by a formal definition that would raise philosophical and epistemological questions whose discussion would take LIS far away from the main line of our thought.

In "war games" a certain number of soldiers are declared to have been "killed" and guns "destroyed." They are, according to the rules of the game, but this has no consequences for them as persons, or as things; the "dead" soldier enjoys his short rest, the "destroyed" cannon will go on serving its purpose. The worst fate for the losing side would be that its commanding general might be handicapped in his further career. In other words, what

happens in the war game does not affect anything in the realistic situation of most of those involved.

Games played for money are another case in point. Most people who bet on cards, roulette, or the horses are very aware of the borderline between “game” and “reality”; they play only for amounts whose loss does not seriously affect their economic situation, i.e., has no serious consequences.

A minority, the real “gamblers,” will risk amounts whose loss would, indeed, affect their economic situation up to the point of ruin. But the “gambler” does not really “play a game”; he is involved in a very realistic, often dramatic form of living. The same “game-reality” concept holds true for a sport like fencing; neither of the two persons involved risks his life. If the situation is constructed in such a way that he does, we speak of a duel, not of a game.[16]

If in psychological experiments the “subjects” were clearly aware that the whole situation is only a game, everything would be simple. But in many experiments, as in that of Milgram, they are misinformed and lied to; as for the prison experiment it was set up in such a way that the awareness that everything was only an experiment would be minimized or lost. The very fact that many of these experiments, in order to be undertaken at all, must operate with fakery demonstrates this peculiar unreality; the participants’ sense of reality is confused and their critical judgment greatly reduced.[17]

In “real life” the person knows that his behavior will have consequences. A person may have a phantasy of wanting to kill somebody, but only rarely does the phantasy lead to deeds. Many express these phantasies in dreams because in the state of sleep phantasies have no consequences. Experiments in which the subjects lack a complete feeling of reality may cause reactions that represent unconscious tendencies, rather than show how the subject would behave in reality.[18] Whether an event is real or a game is of decisive importance for still another reason. It is well known that a *real* danger tends to mobilize “emergency energy” to deal with it, often to an extent that the person involved would never have thought of himself as having the required physical strength, skill, or endurance. But this emergency energy is mobilized only when the whole organism is confronted with a real danger, and for good neurophysiological reasons; dangers the person daydreams about do not stimulate the organism in this

way, but only lead to fear and worry. The same principle holds true not only for emergency reactions in face of danger, but for the difference between phantasy and reality in many other respects, as for instance the mobilization of moral inhibitions and reactions of conscience which fail to be aroused when the whole situation is not felt to be real.

In addition, the role of the experimenter must he considered in laboratory experiments of this type. He presides over a fictitious reality constructed and controlled by him. In a certain sense *he* represents reality for the subject and for this reason his influence is a hypnoid one akin to that of a hypnotist toward his subject. The experimenter relieves the subject, to some extent, of his responsibility and of his own will, and hence makes him much more prone to obey the rules than the subject would be in a nonhypnoid situation.

Finally, the difference between the mock prisoners and real prisoners is so great that it is virtually impossible to draw valid analogies from observation of the former. For a prisoner who has been sent to prison for a certain action, the situation is very real: he knows the reasons (whether his punishment is just or not is another problem); he knows his helplessness and the few rights he has, he knows his chances for an earlier release. Whether a man knows that he is to stay in prison (even under the worst conditions) for two weeks or two months or two years or twenty years obviously is a decisive factor that influences his attitude. This factor alone is critical for his hopelessness, demoralization, and sometimes (although exceptionally) for the mobilization of new energies—with benign or malignant aims. Furthermore, a prisoner is not “a prisoner.” Prisoners are individuals and they react individually according to the differences in their respective character structures. But this does not imply that their reaction is *only* a function of their character and not one of their environment. It is merely naive to assume that it must be either this or that. The complex and challenging problem in each individual—and group—is to find out what the specific interaction is between a given character structure and a given social structure. It is at this point that real investigation begins, and it is only stifled by the assumption that the situation is the one factor which explains human behavior.

The Frustration-Aggression Theory

There are many other behavioristically oriented studies of aggression;[19] none, however, develops a general theory of the origins of aggression and violence, with the exception of the frustration aggression theory developed by J. Dollard *et al.* (1939), which claims to have found the cause of all aggression. More specifically, that "the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and contrariwise, the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression." (J. Dollard *et al.*, 1939.) Two years later one of the authors, N. E. Miller, dropped the second part of the hypothesis, allowing that frustration could instigate a number of different types of responses, only one of them being aggression. (N. E. Miller, 1941.)

This theory was, according to Buss, accepted by practically all psychologists, with very few exceptions. Buss himself comes to the critical conclusion that "the emphasis on frustration has led to an unfortunate neglect of the other large class of antecedents (noxious stimuli) as well as the neglect of aggression as an instrumental response. Frustration is only one antecedent of aggression and it is not the most potent one." (A. H. Buss, 1961.)

A thorough discussion of the frustration-aggression theory is impossible within the framework of this book because of the extent of the literature which would have to be dealt with.[20] I shall restrict myself in the following to a few basic points.

The simplicity of the original formulation of the theory is greatly marred by the ambiguity of what is understood by frustration. Basically there are two meanings in which the term has been understood: *(a)* The interruption of an ongoing, goal-directed activity. (Examples would be a boy with his hand in the cookie jar, when mother enters and makes him stop; or a sexually aroused person, interrupted in the act of coitus.) *(b)* Frustration as the negation of a desire or wish—"deprivation," according to Buss. (Examples, the boy who asks mother to give him a cookie and she refuses; or a man propositions a woman and is rejected.)

One reason for the ambiguity of the term "frustration" lies in that Dollard *et al.* have not expressed themselves with the necessary clarity. Another reason lies probably in that the word "frustration" is popularly used in the second sense, and that psychoanalytic thinking has also contributed to this usage. (For instance, a child's wish for love is "frustrated" by his mother.)

Depending on the meaning of frustration, we deal with two entirely different theories. Frustration in the first sense would be relatively rare because it requires that the intended activity has already begun. It would not be frequent enough to explain all or even a considerable part of aggression. At the same time the explanation of aggression as the result of the interruption of an activity may be the only sound part of the theory. To prove or disprove it, new neurophysiological data may be of decisive value.

On the other hand, the theory which is based on the second meaning of frustration does not seem to stand up against the weight of the empirical evidence. First of all, we might consider a basic fact of life: that nothing important is achieved without accepting frustration. The idea that one can learn without effort, i.e., without frustration, may be good as an advertising slogan, but is certainly not true in the acquisition of major skills. Without the capacity to accept frustration man would hardly have developed at all. And does not everyday observation show that many times people suffer frustrations without having an aggressive response? What can, and often does, produce aggression is what the frustration *means* to the person, and the psychological meaning of frustration differs according to the total constellation in which the frustration occurs.

If a child, for instance, is forbidden to eat candy, this frustration, provided the parent's attitude is genuinely loving and free from pleasure in controlling, will not mobilize aggression; but if this prohibition is only one of many manifestations of the parent's desire for control, or if, for instance, a sibling is permitted to eat it, considerable anger is likely to be the result. What produces the aggression is not the frustration as such, but the injustice or rejection involved in the situation.

The most important factor in determining the occurrence and intensity of frustration is the *character* of a person. A very greedy person, for instance, will react angrily when he does not get all the food he wants, and a miserly person, when his wish to buy something cheap is frustrated; the narcissistic person feels frustrated when he does not get the praise and recognition he expects. The character of the person determines in the first place *what* frustrates him, and in the second place the *intensity* of his reaction to frustration.

Valuable as many of the behavioristically oriented psychological studies on aggression are in terms of their own goals, they have not resulted in the formulation of a global hypothesis on the causes of violent

aggression. “Few of the studies that we examined,” concludes Megargee in his excellent survey of the psychological literature, “attempted to test theories of human violence. Those empirical studies which did focus on violence *were generally not designed to test theories.* Investigations that did focus on important theoretical issues generally investigated milder aggressive behavior or used infrahuman subjects.” (E. I. Megargee, 1969. Italics added.) Considering the brilliance of the investigators, the means for research at their disposal, and the number of students eager to excel in scientific work, these meager results seem to confirm the assumption that behavioristic psychology does not lend itself to the development of a systematic theory concerning the sources of violent aggression.

[1]Since a full consideration of the merits of Skinnerian theory would lead too far away from our main problem, I shall restrict myself in the following to the presentation of the general principles of neobehaviorism and to the more detailed discussion of some points which seem to be relevant for our discussion. For the study of Skinner’s system one should read B. F. Skinner (1953). For a brief version cf. B. F. Skinner (1963). In his latest book (1971) he discusses the general principles of his system, especially their relevance for culture. Cf. also the brief discussion between Carl R. Rogers and B. F. Skinner (1956) and B. F. Skinner (1961). For a critique of Skinner’s position, cf. Noam Chomsky (1959). See also the counterargument of K. MacCorquodale (1970) and N. Chomsky (1971). Chomsky’s reviews are thorough and far-reaching and make their points so brilliantly that there is no need to repeat them. Nevertheless Chomsky’s anti my own psychological positions are so far apart that I have to present some of my critique in this chapter.

[2]Skinner, in contrast to many behaviorists, even concedes that “private events” need not be entirely ruled out of scientific considerations and adds that “a behavioral theory of knowledge suggests that the private world which, if not entirely unknowable, is at least not likely to be known well.” (B. F. Skinner, 1963.) This qualification makes Skinner’s concession little more than a polite bow to the soul-psyche, the subject matter of psychology.

[3]I have discussed this idea in *The Revolution of Hope* (E. Fromm, 1968a*).* Independently, H. Ozbekhan has formulated the same principle in his paper, “The Triumph of Technology: ‘Can Implies Ought.’” (H. Ozbekhan, 1966.)

Dr. Michael Maccoby has drawn my attention to some results of his study of the management of highly developed industries, which indicate that the principle “can implies ought” is more valid in industries which produce for the military establishment than for the remaining, more competitive industry. But even if this argument is correct, two factors must be considered: first, the size of the

industry which works directly or indirectly for the armed forces; second, that the principle has taken hold of the minds of many people who are not directly related to industrial production. A good example was the initial enthusiasm for space flights; another example is the tendency in medicine to construct and use gadgets regardless of their real importance for a specific case.

[4]By the same logic the relation between torturer and the tortured is "reciprocal," because the tortured, by his manifestation of pain, conditions the torturer to use the most effective instruments of torture.

[5]L. Berkowitz has taken a stand in many ways similar to that of A. H. Buss; he too is not unreceptive to the idea of motivating emotions, but essentially stays within the framework of behavioristic theory; he modifies the frustration-aggression theory but does not reject it. (L. Berkowitz, 1962 and 1969.)

[6]Cf. J. Robert Oppenheimer's address (1955) and many similar statements by outstanding natural scientists.

[7]I put the two terms in quotation marks because they are often loosely used and sometimes have become identical with socially adapted and nonadapted, respectively.

[8]I have found "interpretative questionnaires" to be a valuable tool in the study of underlying and largely unconscious motivations of groups. An interpretative questionnaire analyzes the not-intended meaning of an answer (to an open question) and interprets the answers in a characteristic sense rather than takes them at their face value. I had first applied this method in 1932 in a study at the Institute of Social Research, University of Frankfurt, and used it again in the 1960s in a study of the social character of a small Mexican village. Among the main collaborators in the first study were Ernest Schachtel, the late Anna Hartoch-Schachtel, and Paul Lazarsfeld (as statistical consultant). This study was finished in the mid thirties, but only the questionnaire and sample answers were published. (M. Horkheimer, ed., 1936). The second study has been published. (E. Fromm and M. Maccoby, 1970b.) Maccoby and I have also devised a questionnaire to determine the factors that indicate the necrophilic character, and Maccoby has applied this questionnaire to various groups with satisfactory results. (M. Maccoby, 1970a.)

[9]All following quotations are from S. Milgram (1963).

[10]No actual electric shocks were administered, but this was not known to the teacher-subjects.

[11]Except as otherwise noted, the following quotations are from the joint paper, the manuscript of which Dr. Zimbardo kindly sent me.

[12]Personal communications from H. Brandt and Professor H. Simonson—both of whom spent many years in concentration camps as political prisoners—and others who preferred not to be mentioned by name. Cf. also H. Brandt (1970).

[13]I know from Dr. J. M. Steiner that he is preparing a study based on such interviews for the press; this promises to be an important contribution.

[14]At that time a guard had to submit a written report only when he had killed a prisoner.

[15]For a much fuller description see H. Brandt (1970).

[16]M. Maccoby's studies on the significance of the game attitude in the social character of Americans has sharpened my awareness of the dynamics of the "game" attitude. (M. Maccoby, to be published soon. Cf. also M. Maccoby, 1972.)

[17]They remind one of an essential feature of TV commercials, in which an atmosphere is created that confuses the difference between phantasy and reality, and which lends itself to the suggestive influence of the "message." The viewer "knows" that the use of a certain soap will not bring about a miraculous change in his life, yet simultaneously another part of him does believe this. Instead of deciding what is real and what is fiction, he continues to think in the twilight of non-differentiation between reality and illusion.

[18]For this reason an occasional murderous dream only permits the qualitative statement that such impulses exist, but no quantitative statement about their intensity. Only their frequent recurrence would permit also quantitative analysis.

[19]Cf. an excellent survey of psychological studies on violence (E. I. Megargee, 1969).

[20]Among the most significant discussions of the frustration-aggression theory to be mentioned, aside from A. H. Buss's work, is L. Berkowitz's "Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis Revisited" (1969). Berkowitz is critical, yet on the whole, positive; and he cites a number of the more recent experiments.

3. Instinctivism and Behaviorism: Their Differences and Similarities

A Common Ground

THE MAN OF THE INSTINCTIVISTS lives the past of the species, as the man of the behaviorists lives the present of his social system. The former is a machine that can only produce inherited patterns of the past; the latter is a machine[1] that can only produce social patterns of the present. Instinctivism and behaviorism have one basic premise in common: that man has no psyche with its own structure and its own laws.

For instinctivism in Lorenz's sense the same holds true; this has been formulated most radically by one of Lorenz's former students, Paul Leyhausen. He criticizes those psychologists dealing with humans *(Humanpsychologen)* who claim that anything psychic can only be explained psychologically, i.e., on the basis of psychological premises. (The "only" is a slight distortion of their position for the sake of a better argument.) Leyhausen claims that, on the contrary, "If there is an area where we certainly can not find the explanation for psychic events and experiences, it is the area of the psyche itself; this is so for the same reason that we cannot find an explanation for digestion in the digestive processes, but in those special ecological conditions that existed about a billion years ago. These conditions exposed a number of organisms to selective pressures which made them assimilate not only inorganic foodstuff, but also those of an organic nature. In the same way psychical processes are also achievements which have come about as a result of selective pressures of life—and species—preserving value. Their explanation is in every sense pre-psychological…" (K. Lorenz, P. Leyhausen, 1968. My translation.) Put in simpler language, Leyhausen maintains that one can explain psychological data by the evolutionary process alone. The crucial point here is what is meant by "explain." If, for instance, one wants to know how the effect of fear is *possible* as the result of the evolution of the brain from the lowest to the highest animals, then this is a task for those scientists who

investigate the evolution of the brain. However, if one wants to explain why a person is frightened, the data on evolution will not contribute much to the answer: the explanation must be essentially a psychological one. Perhaps the person is threatened by a stronger enemy, or is coping with his own repressed aggression, or suffers from a sense of powerlessness, or a paranoid element in him makes him feel persecuted, or—many other factors that alone or in combination may explain his fright. To want to explain the fright of a particular person by an evolutionary process is plainly futile.

Leyhausen's premise, that the only approach to the study of human phenomena is the evolutionary one, means that we understand the psychical process in man exclusively by knowing how, in the process of evolution, he became what he is. Similarly, he suggests that digestive processes are to be explained in terms of conditions as they existed millions of years ago. Could a physician dealing with disturbances of the digestive tract help his patient if he were concerned with the evolution of digestion, rather than with the causes of the particular symptom in this particular patient? For Leyhausen evolution becomes the only science, and absorbs all other sciences dealing with man. Lorenz, as far as I know, never formulated this principle so drastically, but his theory is built on the same premise. He claims that man understands himself only and *sufficiently* if he understands the evolutionary process which made him become what he is now.[2]

In spite of the great differences between instinctivistic and behavioristic theory, they have a common basic orientation. They both exclude the *person*, the behaving man, from their field of vision. Whether man is the product of conditioning, or the product of animal evolution, he is exclusively determined by conditions outside himself; he has no part in his own life, no responsibility, and not even a trace of freedom. Man is a puppet, controllers by strings—instinct or conditioning.

More Recent Views

In spite of—or perhaps because of—the facts that instinctivists anti behaviorists share certain similarities in their respective pictures of man and in their philosophical orientation, they have fought each other with a remarkable fanaticism. "Nature *OR* nurture," "instinct *OR* environment" became flags around which each side rallied, refusing to see any common ground. In recent years there has been a growing tendency to overcome the

sharp alternatives of the instinctivist—behaviorist war. One solution was to change the terminology; some tended to reserve the term “instinct” for the lower animals and to speak instead of “organic drives” when discussing human motivations. In this way some developed such formulations as “most of man’s behavior is learned, whereas most of a bird’s behavior is not learned.” (W. C. Alee, H. W. Nissen, M. F. Nimkoff, 1953.) This latter formulation is characteristic of the new trend to replace the old “either—or” by a “more-or-less” formulation, thus taking account of gradual change in the weight of the respective factors. The model for this view is a continuum, on the one end of which is (almost) complete innate determination, on the other end (almost) complete learning.

F. A. Beach, an outstanding opponent of instinctivistic theory, writes:

> Perhaps a more serious weakness in the present psychological handling of instinct lies in the assumption that a two-class system is adequate for the classification of complex behavior. The implication that all behavior must be determined by learning or by heredity, neither of which is more than partially understood, is entirely unjustified. The final form of any response is affected by a multiplicity of variables, only two of which are genetical and experiential factors. It is to the identification and analysis of all these factors that psychology should address itself. When this task is properly conceived and executed there will be no need nor reason for ambiguous concepts of instinctive behavior. (F. A. Beach, 1955.)

In a similar vein, N. R. F. Maier and T. C. Schneirla write:

> Because learning plays a more important role in the behavior of higher than in the behavior of lower forms, the natively determined behavior patterns of higher forms become much more extensively modified by experience than those of lower forms. It is through such modification that the animal may become adjusted to different environments and escape from the narrow bounds the optimum condition imposes. Higher forms are therefore less dependent upon specific external environmental conditions for survival than are lower forms.
>
> Because of the interaction of acquired and innate factors in behavior it is impossible to classify many behavior patterns. Each type

> of behavior must be separately investigated. (N. R. F. Maier and T. C. Schneirla, 1964.)

The position taken in this book is in some respects close to that of the authors just mentioned and others who refuse to continue fighting under the flags of “instincts” versus “learning.” However, as I shall show in Part Three, the more important problem from the standpoint of this study is the difference between “organic drives” (food, fight, flight, sexuality—formerly called “instincts”), whose function it is to guarantee the survival of the individual and the species, and “nonorganic drives” (character-rooted passions),[3] which are not phylogenetically programmed and are not common to all men: the desire for love and freedom; destructiveness, narcissism, sadism, masochism.

Often these nonorganic drives that form man’s second nature are confused with organic drives. A case in point is the sexual drive. It is a psychoanalytically well-established observation that often the intensity of what is subjectively felt as sexual desire (including its corresponding physiological manifestations) is due to nonsexual passions such as narcissism, sadism, masochism, the wish for power, and even anxiety, loneliness, and boredom.

For a narcissistic male, for instance, the sight of a woman may be sexually exciting because he is excited by the possibility of proving to himself how attractive he is. Or a sadistic person may be sexually excited by the chance to conquer a woman (or as the case may be, a man) and to control her or him. Many people are bound for years to each other emotionally just by this motive, especially when the sadism of one fits the masochism of the other. It is rather well known that fame, power, and wealth makes its possessor sexually attractive if certain physical conditions are present. In all these instances the physical desire is mobilized by nonsexual passions which thus find their satisfaction. Indeed, it is anybody’s guess how many children owe their existence to vanity, sadism, and masochism, rather than to genuine physical attraction, not to speak of love. But people, especially men, prefer to think that they are “oversexed” rather than that they are “overvain.”[4]

The same phenomenon has been clinically studied minutely in cases of compulsive eating. This symptom is not motivated by “physiological” but

by “psychic” hunger, engendered by the feeling of being depressed, anxious, “empty.”

My thesis—to be demonstrated in the following chapters—is that destructiveness and cruelty are not instinctual drives, but passions rooted in the total existence of man. They are one of the ways to make sense of life; they are not and could not be present in the animal, because they are by their very nature rooted in the “human condition.” The main error of Lorenz and other instinctivists is to have confused the two kinds of drives, those rooted in *instinct,* and those rooted in *character.* A sadistic person who waits for the occasion, as it were, to express his sadism, looks as if he fitted the hydraulic model of a dammed-up instinct. But only people with a sadistic character wait for the opportunity to behave sadistically, just as people with a loving character wait for the opportunity to express their love.

The Political and Social Background of Both Theories

It is instructive to examine in some detail the social and political background of the war between the environmentalists and the instinctivists.

The environmental theory is characterized by the spirit of the political revolution of the middle classes in the eighteenth century against feudal privileges. Feudalism had rested on the assumption that its order was a natural one; in the battle against this “natural” order, which the middle classes wanted to overthrow, one was prone to arrive at the theory that the status of a person was not at all dependent on any innate or natural factors, but that it depended entirely on social arrangements, the improvement of which was the task of the revolution. No vice or stupidity was to be explained as being due to human nature as such, but to the bad and vicious arrangements of society: hence there was no obstacle to an absolute optimism in the future of man.

While environmentalist theory was thus closely related to the revolutionary hopes of the rising middle classes in the eighteenth century, the instinctivist movement based on Darwin’s teaching reflects the basic assumption of nineteenth-century capitalism. Capitalism as a system in which harmony is created by ruthless competition between all individuals would appear to be a natural order if one could prove that the most complex and remarkable phenomenon, man, is a product of the ruthless competition among all living beings since the emergence of life. The development of

life from monocellular organisms to man would seem to be the most splendid example of free enterprise, in which the best win through competition and those who are not fit to survive in the progressing economic system are eliminated.[5]

The reasons for the victorious anti-instinctivistic revolution, led by K. Dunlap, Zing Yang Kuo, and L. Bernard in the 1920s, may be seen in the difference between the capitalism of the twentieth century and that of the nineteenth. I shall mention only a few points of difference which are relevant here. Nineteenth-century capitalism was one of fierce competition among capitalists which led to the elimination of the weaker and less efficient among them. In twentieth-century capitalism the element of competition has to some extent given way to cooperation among the big enterprises. Hence the proof that fierce competition corresponded to a law of nature was no longer needed. Another important point of difference lies in the change of the method of control. In nineteenth-century capitalism control was largely based on the exercise of strict patriarchal principles, morally supported by the authority of God and king. Cybernetic capitalism, with its gigantic centralized enterprises and its capacity to provide the workers with amusements *and* bread, is able to maintain control by psychological manipulation and human engineering. It needs a man who is very malleable and easily influenced, rather than one whose "instincts" are controlled by fear of authority. Finally, contemporary industrial society has a different vision of the aim of life than that of the last century. At that time the ideal—at least for the middle classes—was independence, private initiative, to be "the captain of my ship." The contemporary vision, however, is that of unlimited consumption and unlimited control over nature. Men are fired by the dream that one day they will completely control nature and thus be like God; why should there be anything in *human* nature that cannot be controlled?

But if behaviorism expresses the mood of the twentieth-century industrialism, how can we explain the revival of instinctivism in the writings of Lorenz and its popularity among the broad public? As I have pointed out, one reason for this is the sense of fear and hopelessness that pervades many people because of the ever-increasing dangers and that nothing is done to avert them. Many who had faith in progress and had hoped for basic changes in man's fate, instead of carefully analyzing the social process which led to their disillusionment, are taking refuge in the

explanation that man's nature must be responsible for this failure. Finally, there are the personal and political biases of the authors who become spokesmen for the new instinctivism.

Some writers in this field are only dimly aware of the political and philosophical implications of their respective theories. Nor have the connections found much attention among the commentators on these theories. But there are exceptions. N. Pastore (1949) compared the sociopolitical views of twenty-four psychologists, biologists, and sociologists concerning the nature-nurture problem. Among the twelve "liberals," or radicals, eleven were environmentalists and one a hereditarian; among the twelve "conservatives," eleven were hereditarians and one an environmentalist. Even considering the small number of persons involved, this result is quite telling.

Other authors are aware of the emotional implications, but usually only of those in the hypotheses of their opponents. A good example of this one-sided awareness is a statement by one of the most distinguished representatives of orthodox psychoanalysis, R. Waelder:

> I am referring to a group of critics who either were outright Marxists or at least belonged to that branch of Western liberal tradition of which Marxism itself was an offshoot, i.e., the school of thought which passionately believed that man is "good" by nature and that whatever ills and evils there are in human affairs are due to rotten institutions—perhaps to the institution of private property or, in a more recent and more moderate version, to a so-called "neurotic culture"…
>
> But whether evolutionist or revolutionary, whether moderate or radical or of one-track mind, no believer in the fundamental goodness of man and in the exclusive responsibility of external causes for human suffering could help being disturbed by a theory of an instinct of destruction or a death instinct. For if this theory is true, potentialities for conflict and for suffering are inherent in human affairs, and attempts to abolish or mitigate suffering appear to be, if not hopeless undertakings, at least far more complicated ones than the social revolutionaries had fancied them to be. (R. Waelder, 1956.)

Penetrating as Waelder's remarks are, it is nevertheless noteworthy that he only sees the bias of the anti-instinctivists and not of those who share his

own position.

[1]In H. von Foerster's (1970) sense of a "trivial machine."

[2]The Lorenz-Leyhausen position has its parallel in a distorted form of psychoanalysis which assumes that psychoanalysis is identical with the understanding of the patient's history without the necessity of understanding the dynamics of the psychic process as it is at present.

[3]"Nonorganic" does not mean, of course, that they have no neurophysiological substrate, but that they are not initiated by, nor do they serve organic needs.

[4]This a particularly clear in the phenomenon of "machismo," the virtue of maleness. (A. Aramoni, 1965; cf. also, E. Fromm and M. Maccoby, 1970b.)

[5]This historical interpretation has nothing to do with the validity of Darwinian theory, although perhaps it has to do with the neglect of some facts like the role of cooperation and with the popularity of the theory.

4. The Psychoanalytic Approach to the Understanding of Aggression

DOES THE *PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH* offer a method for understanding aggression that avoids the shortcomings both of the behavioristic and the instinctivistic approaches? At first glance, it seems as if psychoanalysis not only has avoided their shortcomings, but that it is afflicted, in fact, by a combination of them. Psychoanalytic theory is at the same time instinctivistic[1] in its general theoretical concepts and environmentalistic in its therapeutic orientation.

That Freud's theory[2] is instinctivistic, explaining human behavior as the result of the struggle between the instinct for self-preservation and the sexual instinct (and in his later theory between the life and death instincts) is too well known to require any documentation. The environmentalist framework can also be easily recognized when one considers that analytic therapy attempts to explain the development of a person by the specific environmental constellation of infancy, i.e., the impact of the family. This aspect, however, is reconciled with instinctivism by the assumption that the modifying influence of the environment occurs via the influence of the libidinous structure.

In practice, however, patients, the public, and frequently analysts themselves pay only lip service to the specific vicissitudes of the sexual instincts (very often these vicissitudes are reconstructed on the basis of "evidence" which in itself is often a construction based on the system of theoretical expectations) and take a totally environmentalistic position. Their axiom is that every negative development in the patient is to be understood as the result of damaging influences in early childhood. This has led sometimes to irrational self-accusation on the part of parents who feel guilty for every undesirable or pathological trait that appears in a child after birth, and to a tendency of people in analysis to put the blame for all their troubles on their parents, and to avoid confronting themselves with the problem of their own responsibility.

In the light of all this, it would seem legitimate for psychologists to classify psychoanalysis as *theory* under the category of instinctivistic theories, and thus their argument against Lorenz is *eo ipso* an argument against psychoanalysis. But caution is necessary here; the question is: How should one define psychoanalysis? Is it the sum total of Freud's theories, or can we distinguish between the original and creative and the accidental, time-conditioned parts of the system, a distinction that can be made in the work of all great pioneers of thought? If such a distinction is legitimate, we must ask whether the libido theory belongs to the core of Freud's work or whether it is simply the form in which he organized his new insights because there was no other way to think of and to express his basic findings, given his philosophical and scientific environment. (E. Fromm, 1970a.)

Freud himself never claimed that the libido theory was a scientific certainty. He called it "our mythology," and replaced it with the theory of the Eros and death "instincts." It is equally significant that he defined psychoanalysis as a theory based on resistance and transference—and by omission, not on the libido theory.

But perhaps more important than Freud's own statements is to keep in mind what gave his discoveries their unique historical significance. Surely it could not have been the instinctivistic theory as such; instinct theories had been quite popular since the nineteenth century. That he singled out the *sexual* instinct as the source of all passions (aside from the instinct for self-preservation) was, of course, new and revolutionary at a time still ruled by Victorian middle-class morality. But even this special version of the instinct theory would probably not have made such a powerful and lasting impact. It seems to me that what gave Freud his historical significance was the discovery of unconscious processes, not philosophically or speculatively, but empirically, as he demonstrated in some of his case histories, and most of all in his fundamental opus, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). If it can be shown, for instance, that a consciously peaceful and conscientious man has powerful impulses to kill, it is a secondary question whether one explains these impulses as being derived from his "Oedipal" hate against his father, as a manifestation of his death instinct, as a result of his wounded narcissism, or as due to other reasons. Freud's revolution was to make us recognize the unconscious aspect of man's mind and the energy which he uses to repress the awareness of undesirable desires. Freud showed that

good intentions mean nothing if they cover up the unconscious desires: he unmasked “honest” dishonesty by demonstrating that it is not enough to have “meant” well *consciously*. He was the first scientist to explore the depth, the underworld in man, and that is why his ideas had such an impact on artists and writers at a time when most psychiatrists still refused to take his theories seriously.

But Freud went further. He not only showed that forces operate in man of which he is not aware and that rationalizations protect him from awareness; he also explained that these unconscious forces are integrated in a system to which he gave the name “character” in a new, dynamic sense.[3]

Freud began to develop this concept in his first paper on the “anal character.” (S. Freud, 1908.) Certain behavior traits, such as stubbornness, orderliness, and parsimony, he pointed out, were more often than not to be found together as a syndrome of traits. Furthermore, wherever that syndrome existed, one could find peculiarities in the sphere of toilet training and in the vicissitudes of sphincter control and in certain behavioral traits related to bowel movements and feces. Thus Freud’s first step was to discover a syndrome of behavioral traits and to relate them to the way the child acted (in part as a response to certain demands by those who trained him) in the sphere of bowel movements. His brilliant and creative next step was to relate these two sets of behavioral patterns by a theoretical consideration based on a previous assumption about the evolution of the libido. This assumption was that during an early phase of childhood development, after the mouth has ceased to be the main organ of lust and satisfaction, the anus becomes an important erogenous zone, and most libidinal wishes are centered around the process of the retention and evacuation of the excrements. His conclusion was to explain the syndrome of behavioral traits as sublimation of, or reaction formation against the libidinous satisfaction or frustration of anality. Stubbornness and parsimony were supposed to be the sublimation of the original refusal to give up the pleasure of retaining the stool; orderliness, the reaction formation against the original desire of the infant to evacuate whenever he pleased. Freud showed that the three original traits of the syndrome, which until then had appeared to be quite unrelated to each other, formed part of a structure, or system, because they were all rooted in the same source of anal libido which manifests itself in these traits, either directly or by reaction formation

or by sublimation. In this way Freud was able to explain why these traits are charged with energy and, in fact, very resistant to change.[4]

One of the most important additions was the concept of the "oral-sadistic" character (the exploitative character, in my terms). There are other concepts of character formation, depending on what aspects one wants to stress: such as the authoritarian[5] (sadomasochistic) character, the rebellious and the revolutionary character, the narcissistic and the incestuous character. These latter concepts, most of which do not form part of classic psychoanalytic thinking, are related to each other and overlap; by combining them one can get a still fuller description of a certain character.

Freud's theoretical explanation for character structure was the notion that the libido (oral, anal, genital) was the source that gave energy to the various character traits. But even if one discounts the libido theory, his discovery loses none of its importance for the clinical observation of the syndromes, and the fact that a common source of energy feeds them remains equally true. I have attempted to demonstrate that the character syndromes are rooted and nourished in the particular forms of relatedness of the individual to the outside world and himself; furthermore, that inasmuch as the social group shares a common character structure ("social character") the socioeconomic conditions shared by all members of a group mold the social character. (E. Fromm, 1932a, 1936a, 1941a, 1947a, 1970a; E. Fromm and M. Maccoby, 1970b.)[6]

The extraordinary importance of the concept of character is that it transcends the old dichotomy: instinct-environment. The sexual instinct in Freud's system was supposed to be very malleable, and to a large extent molded by environmental influences. Thus character was understood as being the outcome of the interaction between instinct and environment. This new position was possible only because Freud had subsumed all instincts tinder one, i.e., sexuality (aside from the instinct for self-preservation). The many instincts we find in the lists of the older instinctivists were relatively fixed, because each motive of behavior was attributed to a special kind of innate drive. But in Freud's scheme the differences between the various motivating forces were explained as the result of environmental influence in the libido. Paradoxically, then, Freud's enlargement of the concept of sexuality enabled him to open the door to the acceptance of environmental influences far beyond what was possible for the pre-Freudian instinct theory. Love, tenderness, sadism, masochism, ambition, curiosity, anxiety,

rivalry—these and many other drives were no longer each attributed to a special instinct, but to the influence of the environment (essentially the significant persons in early childhood), via the libido. Freud consciously remained loyal to the philosophy of his teachers, but by the assumption of a super-instinct he transcended his own instinctivistic viewpoint. It is true he still hobbled his thought by the predominance of the libido theory, and it is time to leave this instinctive baggage behind altogether. What I want to stress at this point is that Freud's "instinctivism" was very different from traditional instinctivism, and in fact was the beginning of overcoming it.

The description given thus far suggests that "character determines behavior," that the character trait, whether loving or destroying, drives man to behave in a certain way, and that man in acting according to his character feels satisfied. Indeed, the character trait tells us how a person would *like* to behave. But we must add an important qualification: *if he could*.

What does this "if he could" mean?

We must return here to one of the most fundamental of Freud's notions, the concept of the "reality principle," based on the instinct for self-preservation, versus the "pleasure principle," based on the sexual instinct. Whether we are driven by the sexual instinct or by a nonsexual passion in which a character trait is rooted, the conflict between what we would like to do and the demands of self-interest remains crucial. We cannot always behave as we are driven to by our passions, because we have to modify our behavior to some extent in order to remain alive. The average person tries to find a compromise between what his character would make him want to do and what he must do in order not to suffer more or less harmful consequences. The degree to which a person follows the dictates of self-preservation (ego interest) varies, of course. At the one extreme the weight of ego interests is zero; this holds true for the martyr and a certain type of fanatical killer. At the other extreme is the "opportunist" for whom self-interest includes everything that could make him more successful, popular, or comfortable. Between these two extremes all people can be arranged, characterized by a specific blend of self-interest and character-rooted passions.

How much a person represses his passionate desires depends not only on factors within himself but on the situation; if the situation changes, repressed desires become conscious and are acted out. This holds true, for instance, for the person with a sadistic-masochistic character. Everybody

knows the type of person who is submissive to his boss and sadistically domineering to his wife and children. Another case in point is the change that occurs in character when the total social situation changes. The sadistic character who may have posed as a meek or even friendly individual may become a fiend in a terroristic society in which sadism is valued rather than deplored. Another may suppress sadistic behavior in all visible actions, while showing it in a subtle expression of the face or in seemingly harmless and marginal remarks.

Repression of character traits also occurs with regard to the most noble impulses. In spite of the fact that the teachings of Jesus are still part of our moral ideology, a man acting in accordance with them is generally considered a fool or a “neurotic”; hence many people still rationalize their generous impulses as being motivated by self-interest.

These considerations show that the motivating power of character traits is influenced by self-interest in varying degrees. They imply that character constitutes the main motivation of human behavior, but restricted and modified by the demands of self-interest under varying conditions. It is the great achievement of Freud not only to have discovered the character traits which underlie behavior, but also to have devised means to study them, such as the interpretation of dreams, free association, and slips of the tongue.

Here lies the fundamental difference between behaviorism and psychoanalytic characterology. Conditioning works through its appeal to self-interest, such as the desire for food, security, praise, avoidance of pain. In animals, self-interest proves to be so strong that by repeated and optimally spaced reinforcements self-interest proves to be stronger than other instincts like sex or aggression. Man of course also behaves in accordance with his self-interest; but not always, and not necessarily so. He often acts according to his passions, his meanest and his noblest, and is often willing—and able—to risk his self-interest, his fortune, his freedom and his life in the pursuit of love, truth, and integrity—or for hate, greed, sadism, and destructiveness. In this very difference lies the reason conditioning cannot be a sufficient explanation for human behavior.

To sum up

What was epoch-making in Freud's findings was that he found the key to the understanding of the system of forces which make up man's character system and to the contradictions within the system. The discovery of unconscious processes of the dynamic concept of character was radical because it went to the roots of human behavior; it was disquieting because nobody can hide any longer behind his good intentions; they were dangerous, because if everybody *were* to know what he *could* know about himself and others, society would be shaken to its very foundations.

As psychoanalysis became successful and respectable it shed its radical core and emphasized that which is generally acceptable. It kept that part of the unconscious which Freud had emphasized, the sexual strivings. The consumer society did away with many of the Victorian taboos (not because of the influence of psychoanalysis but for a number of reasons inherent in its structure). To discover one's incestuous wishes, "castration fear," "penis envy," was no longer upsetting. But to discover repressed character traits such as narcissism, sadism, omnipotence, submission, alienation, indifference, the unconscious betrayal of one's integrity, the illusory nature of one's concept of reality, to discover all this in oneself, in the social fabric, in the leaders one follows—this indeed is "social dynamite." Freud only dealt with an instinctual id; that was quite satisfactory at a time when he did not see any other way to explain human passion except in terms of instincts. But what was revolutionary then is conventional today. The instinct theory instead of being considered a hypothesis, needed at a certain period, became the straitjacket of orthodox psychoanalytic theory and slowed down the further development of the understanding of man's passions, which had been Freud's central interest.

It is for these reasons that I propose that the classification of psychoanalysis as "instinctivistic" theory, which is correct in a formal sense, does not really refer to the substance of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is essentially a theory of unconscious strivings, of resistance, of falsification of reality according to one's subjective needs and expectations ("transference"), of character, and of conflicts between passionate strivings embodied in character traits and the demands for self-preservation. In this revised sense (although based on the core of Freud's discoveries) the approach of this book to the problem of human aggression and destructiveness is psychoanalytic—and neither instinctivistic nor behavioristic,

An increasing number of psychoanalysts have given up Freud's libido theory, but frequently they have not replaced it by an equally precise and systematic theoretical system; the "drives" they employ are not sufficiently grounded, either in physiology or in the conditions of human existence or in an adequate concept of society. They often use somewhat superficial categories—for instance Karen Horney's "competition"—which are not too different from the "cultural patterns" of American anthropology. In contrast, a number of psychoanalysts—most of them influenced by Adolf Meyer—have given up Freud's libido theory and have constructed what seems to me one of the most promising and creative developments in psychoanalytic theory. Mainly on the basis of their study of schizophrenic patients, they arrived at an ever deepening understanding of the unconscious processes going on in interpersonal relations. By being free from the restrictive influence of the libido theory, and particularly the concepts of *id, ego,* and *superego,* they can describe fully what goes on in the relationship between two people and within each one of them in his role as a participant. Among the most outstanding representatives of this school—aside from Adolf Meyer—are Harry Stack Sullivan, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, and Theodore Lidz. In my opinion R. D. Laing has succeeded in giving the most penetrating analyses, not only because he has probed radically into the personal and subjective factors but because his analysis of the social situation is equally radical and free from the uncritical acceptance of present-day society as being sane. Aside from those mentioned so far, the names of Winnicott, Fairbairn, Balint, and Guntrip, among others, represent the development of psychoanalysis from a theory and therapy of instinctual frustration and control into a "theory and therapy that encourages the rebirth and growth of an authentic self within an authentic relationship." (H. Guntrip, 1971.) The work of some "existentialists," such as L. Binswanger, is by comparison lacking in precise descriptions of the interpersonal processes, substituting somewhat vague philosophical notions for precise clinical data.

[1]Freud's use of the term *Trieb,* which is usually translated "instinct," refers to instinct in a wider sense, as a somatically rooted drive, impelling but not strictly determining consummatory behavior.

[2]A detailed analysis of the development of Freud's theory of aggression is to be found in the Appendix.

[3]Freud's theory of character can be understood more easily on the basis of "system theory" which began to develop in the 1920s and has greatly furthered the thinking in some natural sciences, such as biology and neurophysiology and some aspects of sociology. The failure to comprehend systemic thinking may very well be responsible for the lack of understanding of Freud's characterology as well as of Marx's sociology which is based on viewing society as a system. P. Weiss presented a general system of theory of animal behavior (P. Weiss, 1925). In two recent papers he has given a brief and succinct picture of his views on the nature of the system which is the best introduction to the subject I know. (P. Weiss, 1967, 1970.) Cf. also L. von Bertalanffy (1968) and C. W. Churchman (1968).

[4]Traits which were added later to the original syndrome are: exaggerated cleanliness and punctuality; they are also to be understood as reaction formations to the original anal impulses.

[5]I developed this concept in a study of German workers and employees (E. Fromm, 1980a), see footnote on p. 70, see also. E. Fromm (1932a, 1941a, 1970a). T. W. Adorno et al. (1950) dealt with the topic in some respects of the earlier study of the authoritarian character of workers and employees, but without its psychoanalytic approach and the dynamic concept of character.

[6]Erik H. Erikson (1964) in the late development of his theory arrived at a similar point of view in terms of "modes" without emphasizing so clearly the difference from Freud. He demonstrated in regard to the Yurok Indians that character is not determined by libidinal fixations, and he rejects an essential part of the libido theory for the sake of social factors.

Part II:

The Evidence Against the Instinctivist Thesis

5. Neurophysiology

IT IS THE AIM OF the chapters in this section to show that the relevant data in the fields of neurophysiology, animal psychology, paleontology, and anthropology do not support the hypothesis that man is innately endowed with a spontaneous and self-propelling aggressive drive.

The Relationship of Psychology to Neurophysiology

Before entering into the discussion of the neurophysiological data, a few words need to be said about the relationship of psychology, the science of the mind, to the neurosciences, the sciences of the brain.

Each science has its own subject matter, its own methods, and the direction it takes is determined by the applicability of its methods to its data. One cannot expect the neurophysiologist to proceed in the way that would be most desirable from the standpoint of the psychologist, or vice versa. But one can expect both sciences to remain in close contact and to assist each other: this is possible only if both sides have some elementary knowledge that at least permits each to understand the language of the other and to appreciate its most basic findings. If the students of both sciences were in such close contact, they would find that there are certain areas in which the findings of one can be related to those of the other; this is the case, for instance, with regard to the problem of defensive aggression.

However, in most instances psychological and neurophysiological investigations and their respective frames of reference are far apart, and the neuroscientist cannot at present satisfy the psychologist's desire for information about problems such as the neurophysiological equivalent of passions like destructiveness, sadism, masochism, or narcissism,[1] nor can the psychologist be of much help to the neurophysiologist. It would seem that each science should proceed in its own way and solve its own problems, until one day, one must assume, they both have developed to the point where they can approach the same problems with their different methods and can interrelate their findings. It surely would be absurd for either science to wait until the other has brought forth positive or negative

evidence for its hypotheses. As long as a psychological theory is not contradicted by clear neurophysiological evidence, the psychologist must have only the normal scientific distrust of his findings, provided they are based on adequate observation and interpretation of data.

R. B. Livingston makes these observations on the relationship between the two sciences:

> A real union will be established between psychology and neurophysiology when a large number of scientists are well grounded in both disciplines. How secure and useful a junction will be achieved remains to be seen: nonetheless, new areas for research have appeared, wherein students of behavior can manipulate the brain in addition to the environment and wherein students of the brain can make use of behavioral concepts and techniques. Many of the traditional identifications of the two fields are being lost. We should actively discard any remaining provincialism and sense of jurisdiction and rivalry between these disciplines. Whom are we against? Only ignorance in ourselves.
>
> Despite recent progress, there are as yet relatively few resources around the world for basic research in psychology and neurophysiology. Problems that need solution are staggering. Understanding can be advanced only through our modification of present concepts. These in turn are subject to change only through resourceful experimental and theoretical pursuits. (R. B. Livingston, 1962.)

Many people are misled into thinking, as popular reports sometimes suggest, that neurophysiologists have found many answers to the problem of human behavior. Most scholars in the field of the neurosciences, on the contrary, have a very different attitude. T. H. Bullock, who is an expert on the nervous systems of invertebrates, electric fish, and marine mammals, in his paper, “Evolution of Neurophysiological Mechanism,” begins “with a disclaimer of our ability to contribute fundamentally at present to the real question,” and goes on to state that “at bottom we do not have a decent inkling of the neuronal mechanism of learning or the physiological substratum of instinctive patterns or virtually any complex behavioral manifestation.” (T. H. Bullock, 1961.)[2] Similarly, Birger Kaada states:

> Our knowledge and concepts of the central neural organization of aggressive behavior are constricted by the fact that most of the information has been derived from animal experiments, hence almost nothing is known about the relation of the central nervous system to the “feeling” or “affective” aspects of emotions. We are entirely confined to observation and experimental analysis of the expressive or behavioral phenomena and the objectively recorded peripheral bodily changes. Obviously, even these procedures are not entirely reliable, and despite extensive research efforts it is difficult to interpret behavior on the basis of these clues alone. (B. Kaada, 1967.)

One of the most outstanding neuroscientists, W. Penfield, comes to the same conclusion:

> Those who hope to solve the problem of the neurophysiology of the mind are like men at the foot of a mountain. They stand in the clearings they have made on the foothills, looking up at the mountain they hope to scale. But the pinnacle is hidden in eternal clouds and many believe it can never be conquered. Surely if the day does dawn when man has reached complete understanding of his own brain and mind, it may be his greatest conquest, his final achievement.
>
> There is only one method that a scientist may use in his scientific work. This is the method of observation of the phenomena of nature followed by comparative analysis and supplemented by experimentation in the light of reasoned hypothesis. Neurophysiologists who follow the rules of the scientific method in all honesty will hardly pretend that their own scientific work entitles them to answer these questions. (W. Penfield, 1960.)[3]

More or less radical pessimism has been expressed by a number of neuroscientists with regard to the rapprochement between neuroscience and psychology in general, and particularly with regard to the value of present-day neurophysiology in contributing to the explanation of human behavior. This pessimism has been expressed by H. von Foerster and T. Melnechuk,[4] and by H. R. Maturana and F. C. Varela (forthcoming).[5] F. G. Worden, also in a critical vein, writes: “Examples from neuroscience research are given to illustrate how, as investigators become more directly concerned with

conscious phenomena, the inadequacies of the materialistic doctrine are increasingly troublesome, giving rise to the search for better conceptual systems." (F. G. Worden, forthcoming.)[6]

From a number of oral and written communications from neuroscientists I have the impression that this sober view is shared by an increasing number of investigators. The brain is more and more understood as a *whole,* as one system, so that behavior cannot be explained by referring to some of its parts. Impressive data supporting this view have been presented by E. Valenstein (1968), who has shown that the supposed hypothalamic "centers" for hunger, thirst, sex, etc., are not, if they really exist, as pure as previously thought—that stimulation of a "center" for one behavior can elicit behavior appropriate to another if the environment provides stimuli consistent with the second. D. Ploog (1970) has shown that the "aggression" (actually, nonverbal communication of threat) elicited in a squirrel monkey will not be believed by another monkey if the threat is made by the second monkey's social inferior. These data are consistent with the holistic view that the brain takes account, in its reckoning of what behavior to command, of more than one strand of incoming stimulation—that the total state of the physical and social environment at the time modifies the meaning of a specific stimulus.

However, the skepticism regarding the capacity of neurophysiology to explain human behavior adequately does not mean a denial of the *relative* validity of the many experimental findings, especially in the last decades. These findings, while they might be reformulated and integrated in a more global view, are valid enough to give us important clues for the understanding of one kind of aggression, that of *defensive aggression.*

The Brain as a Basis for Aggressive Behavior[7]

The study of the relationship between brain functioning and behavior was largely governed by Darwin's proposition that the structure and functioning of the brain are governed by the principle of the survival of the individual and the species.

Neurophysiologists since then have concentrated their efforts on finding the brain areas which are the substrates of the most elementary impulses and behaviors needed for survival. There is general agreement with MacLean's conclusion, who called these basic brain mechanisms the

four Fs: “feeding, fighting, fleeing and … the performance of sexual activities.” (P. D. MacLean, 1958.) As can easily be recognized, these activities are vitally necessary for the physical survival of the individual and the species. (That man has basic needs beyond physical survival whose realization is necessary for his functioning as a total being will be discussed later.)

As far as aggression and flight are concerned, the work of a number of investigators—W. R. Hess, J. Olds, R. G. Heath, J. M. R. Delgado, and others—has suggested that they are “controlled”[8] by different neural areas in the brain. It has been shown that, for example, the effective reaction of rage and its corresponding aggressive behavior pattern can be *activated* by direct electrical stimulation of various areas, such as the amygdala, the lateral hypothalamus, some parts of the mesencephalon, and the central gray matter; and it can be *inhibited* by stimulating other structures, such as the septum, the circumvolution of the cingulum, and the caudal nucleus.[9] With great surgical ingenuity some investigators[10] were able to implant electrodes in a number of specific areas of the brain. They established a two-way connection for observation. By low-voltage electrical stimulation of an area they were able to study changes of behavior in animals, and later in man. They could demonstrate, for instance, the arousal of intensely aggressive behavior by the direct electric stimulation of certain areas, and the inhibition of aggression by stimulating certain others. On the other hand, they could measure the electrical activity of these various areas of the brain when emotions like rage, fear, pleasure, etc., were aroused by environmental stimuli. They could also observe the permanent effects produced by the destruction of certain areas of the brain.

It is indeed quite impressive to witness how a relatively small increase in the electric charge in an electrode implanted in one of the neural substrates of aggression can produce a sudden outburst of uncontrolled, murderous rage and how the reduction of electric stimulation or the stimulation of an aggression-inhibitory center can equally suddenly stop this aggression. Delgado’s spectacular experiment of stopping a charging bull by the stimulation of an inhibitory area (by remote control) has aroused considerable popular interest in this procedure. (J. M. R. Delgado. 1969.)

That a response is activated in some brain areas and inhibited in others is by no means only characteristic of aggression; the same duality exists with regard to other impulses. The brain is, in fact, organized as a *dual*

system. Unless there are specific stimuli (external or internal), aggression is in a state of fluid equilibrium, because activating and inhibiting areas keep each other in a relatively stable balance. This can be recognized particularly clearly when either an activating or an inhibiting area is destroyed. Starting with the classic experiment by Heinrich Klüver and P. C. Bucy (1934) it has been demonstrated, for instance, that destruction of the amygdala transformed animals (rhesus monkeys, wolverines, wildcats, rats, and others) in such a way that they lost—at least temporarily—their capacity for aggressive, violent reactions, even under strong provocation.[11] On the other hand, the destruction of aggression-inhibiting areas, such as small areas of the ventromedial nucleus of the hypothalamus, produces permanently aggressive cats and rats.

Given the dual organization of the brain, the crucial question arises: What are the factors that disturb the balance and produce manifest rage and corresponding violent behavior?

We have already seen that one way in which such disturbance of the balance can be produced is by electric stimulation or destruction of any of the inhibitory areas (aside from hormonal and metabolic changes). Mark and Ervin emphasize that such disturbance of the equilibrium can also occur due to various forms of brain disease that alter the normal circuitry of the brain.

But what are the conditions that change the equilibrium and mobilize aggression, aside from these two instances, one of which is experimentally introduced and the other pathological? What are the causes of “innate” aggression in animals and humans?

The Defensive Function of Aggression

In reviewing both the neurophysiological and the psychological literature on animal and human aggression, the conclusion seems unavoidable that aggressive behavior of animals is a response to *any kind of threat to the survival* or, as I would prefer to say more generally, to *the vital interests of the animal*—whether as an individual or as a member of its species. This general definition comprises many different situations. The most obvious are a direct threat to the life of the individual or a threat to his requirements for sex and food; a more complex form is that of “crowding,” which is a threat to the need for physical space and/or to the social structure

of the group. But what is common to all conditions for the arousal of aggressive behavior is that they constitute a threat to vital interests. Mobilization of aggression in the corresponding brain areas occurs in the service of life, in response to threats to the survival of the individual or of the species; that is to say, *phylogenetically programmed aggression, as it exists in animals and man, is a biologically adaptive, defensive reaction.* That this should be so is not surprising if we remember the Darwinian principle in regard to the evolution of the brain. Since it is the function of the brain to take care of survival, it would provide for immediate reactions to any threat to survival.

Aggression is by no means the only form of reaction to threats. The animal reacts to threats to his existence either with rage and attack or with fear and flight. In fact, flight seems to be the more frequent form of reaction, except when the animal has no chance to flee and therefore fights —as the *ultima ratio.*

Hess was the first to discover that by the electrical stimulation of certain regions of the hypothalamus of a cat, the animal would react either by attack or by flight. As a consequence he subsumed these two kinds of behavior under the category of *"defense reaction,"* indicating that both reactions are in defense of the animal's life.

The neuronal areas which are the substrate for attack and flight are close together, yet distinct. A great deal of work on this question has followed the pioneer studies by W. R. Hess, H. W. Magoun, and others, especially by Hunsperger and his group in Hess's laboratory and by Romaniuk, Levinson, and Flynn.[12] In spite of certain differences in the results to which these various investigators have arrived, they confirm the basic findings of Hess.

Mark and Ervin summarize the present state of knowledge in the following paragraph:

> Any animal, regardless of its species, reacts to a life-threatening attack with one of two patterns of behavior: either with flight, or with aggression and violence—that is, fight. The brain always acts as a unit in directing any behavior; consequently, the mechanisms in the brain that initiate and limit these two dissimilar patterns of self-preservation are closely linked to one another, as well as to all other parts of the brain; and their proper functioning depends on the synchronization of

many complex and delicately balanced subsystems. (V. H. Mark and F. R. Ervin, 1970.)

The "Flight" Instinct

The data on fight and flight as defense reactions make the instinctivistic theory of aggression appear in a peculiar light. The impulse to flee plays—neurophysiologically and behaviorally—the same if not a larger role in animal behavior than the impulse to fight. Neurophysiologically, both impulses are integrated in the same way; there is no basis for saying that aggression is more "natural" than flight. Why then, do instinctivists talk about the intensity of the innate impulses of aggression, rather than about the innate impulse for flight?

If one were to translate the reasoning of the instinctivists regarding the impulse for fight to that of flight one would arrive at this kind of statement: "Man is driven by an innate impulse to flee; he may try to control this impulse by his reason, yet this control will prove to be relatively inefficient, even though some means can be found that may serve to curb the power of the 'flight instinct."'

Considering the emphasis that has been given to innate human aggression as one of the gravest problems of social life, from religious positions down to the scientific work of Lorenz, a theory centered around man's "uncontrollable flight instinct" may sound funny, but it is neurophysiologically as sound as that of "uncontrollable aggression." In fact, from a biological standpoint it would seem that flight serves self-preservation better than fight. To political or military leaders it may, in fact, not sound so funny, but rather sensible. They know from experience that man's nature does not seem to incline toward heroism and that many measures have to be taken to motivate man to fight and to prevent him from running away in order to save his life.

The student of history may raise the question whether the instinct for flight has not proven to be at least as powerful a factor as that for fight. He may come to the conclusion that history has been determined not so much by instinctive aggression as by the attempt to suppress man's "flight instinct." He may speculate that a large part of man's social arrangements and ideological efforts have been devoted to this aim. Man had to be threatened with death to instill in him a feeling of awe for the superior

wisdom of his leaders, to make him believe in the value of “honor.” One tried to terrorize him with the fear of being called a coward or a traitor, or one simply got him drunk with liquor or with the hope of booty and women. Historical analysis might show that the repression of the flight impulse and the apparent dominance of the fight impulse is largely due to cultural rather than to biological factors.

These speculations are only intended to point to the ethological bias in favor of the concept of *Homo aggressivus;* the fundamental fact remains, that the brain of animals and humans has built-in neuronal mechanisms which mobilize aggressive behavior (or flight) in response to threats to the survival of the individual or the species, and that this type of aggression is biologically adaptive and serves life.

Predation and Aggression

There is still another kind of aggression that has caused a great deal of confusion: that of *predatory* land animals. Zoologically they are clearly defined; they comprise the families of cats, hyenas, wolves, and bears.[13]

Experimental evidence is rapidly accumulating to indicate that the neurological basis for predatory aggression is distinct from that of defensive aggression.[14] Lorenz has made the same point from the ethological standpoint:

> The motivation of the hunter is basically different from that of the fighter. The buffalo which the lion fells provokes his aggression as little as the appetizing turkey which I have just seen hanging in the larder provokes mine. The differences in these inner drives can clearly be seen in the expressive movements of the animal: a dog about to catch a hunted rabbit has the same kind of excitedly happy expression as he has when he greets his master or awaits some longed-for treat. From many excellent photographs it can be seen that the lion, in the dramatic movement before he springs, is in no way angry. Growling, laying the ears back, and other well-known expression movements of fighting behavior are seen in predatory animals only when they are very afraid of a wildly resisting prey, and even then the expressions are only suggested. (K. Lorenz, 1966.)

K. E. Moyer on the basis of the available data concerning the neurophysiological bases of various kinds of aggression, distinguished predatory from other types of aggression and comes to the conclusion that "experimental evidence is rapidly accumulating to indicate that the neurological basis for this (predatory) aggression is distinct from that of other kinds." (K. E. Moyer, 1968.)

Not only does predatory behavior have its own neurophysiological substrate, distinct from that for defensive aggression, but the behavior itself is different. It does not show rage and is not interchangeable with flight behavior, but it is purpose-determined, accurately aimed, and the tension ends with the accomplishment of the goal—the attainment of food. The predatory instinct is not one of defense, common to all animals, but of food-finding, common to certain animal species that are morphologically equipped for this task. Of course, predatory behavior is aggressive,[15] but it must he added that this aggression is different from the rage-connected aggression provoked by a threat. It is close to what is sometimes called "instrumental" aggression, i.e., aggression in the service of attaining a desired goal. Nonpredatory animals lack this kind of aggression.

The difference between defensive and predatory aggression is important for the problem of human aggression because man is phylogenetically a nonpredatory animal, and hence this aggression, as far as its neurophysiological roots are concerned, is not of the predatory type. It should be remembered that human dentition "is poorly adapted for the flesh-eating habits of man, who still retains the tooth form of his fruit- and vegetable-eating ancestors. It is interesting to note, too, that man's digestive system has all the physiological hallmarks of a vegetarian, not a carnivore." (J. Napier, 1970.) The diet even of primitive hunters and food gatherers was 75 per cent vegetarian and only 25 per cent or less carnivorous.[16] According to I. DeVore: "All of the Old World primates have essentially a vegetarian diet. So do all of the extant men with the most primitive human economic organization, the remaining hunter-gatherers of the world, except for the arctic Eskimo… Although future archeologists studying contemporary bushmen might conclude that the cracking stones found with bushmen arrowheads were used for pounding bones to get marrow, they were actually used by women to crack open the nuts that happened to provide 80 per cent of the bushman economy." (I. DeVore, 1970.)

Nevertheless, perhaps nothing has contributed more to the picture of the intensity of the innate aggressiveness of animals, and indirectly of man, than the image of the predatory animal. We do not have far to go to find the reasons for this bias.

Man has surrounded himself for many thousands of years with domesticated animals—such as the dog and the cat—which are predatory. In fact, this is one of the reasons man tamed them; he uses the dog to hunt other animals and to attack threatening humans; he uses the cat to chase mice and rats. On the other hand, man was impressed by the aggressiveness of the wolf, the main enemy of his herds of sheep, or of the fox, which devoured his chickens.[17] Thus the animals man has chosen to have nearest in his field of vision have been predatory, and he could hardly have distinguished between predatory and defensive aggressiveness since in their effect both types of aggression result in killing; nor was he able to observe these animals in their own habitat and to appreciate their social and friendly attitude among themselves.

The conclusion which we have arrived at on the basis of the examination of the neurophysiological evidence is essentially the same as the one which two of the most outstanding investigators of aggression, J. P. Scott and Leonard Berkowitz, have suggested, even though their respective theoretical frames of reference differ from mine. Scott writes: “A person who is fortunate enough to exist in an environment which is without stimulation to fight will not suffer physiological or nervous damage because he never fights. This is a quite different situation from the physiology of eating, where the internal processes of metabolism lead to definite physiological changes which eventually produce hunger and stimulation to eat, without any change in the external environment.” (J. P. Scott, 1958.) Berkowitz speaks of a “wiring diagram,” a *“readiness”* to react aggressively to certain stimuli, rather than of “aggressive energy” which may be transmitted genetically. (L. Berkowitz, 1967.)

The data of the neurosciences which I have discussed have helped to establish the concept of one kind of aggression—life preserving, biologically adaptive, defensive aggression. They have been useful for the purpose of showing that man is endowed with a potential aggression which is mobilized by threats to his vital interests. None of these neurophysiological data, however, deal with that form of aggression which is characteristic of man and which he does not share with other mammals:

his propensity to kill and to torture without any "reason," but as a goal in itself, a goal not pursued for the sake of defending life, but desirable and pleasureful in itself.

The neurosciences have not taken up the study of these passions (with the exception of those caused by brain damage), but it can be safely stated that Lorenz's instinctivistic-hydraulic interpretation does not fit well with the model of brain functioning as most neuroscientists see it and is not supported by neurophysiological evidence.

[1]This general statement needs to be qualified by pointing to the attempts of the late Raúl Hernández Peón to discover the neurophysiological equivalent of dream activity; to R. G. Heath's neurophysiological studies on schizophrenia and boredom, and to P. D. MacLean's attempts to find neurophysiological explanations for paranoia. Freud's own contribution to neurophysiology has been discussed by K. Pribram (1962). Cf. P. Ammacher (1962) on the significance of Freud's neurological background; cf. also R. R. Holt (1965).

[2]More recently, however, while still standing by this statement, Bullock has qualified it by a more optimistic note: "Since 1958, neuroscience has gone a long way toward understanding some higher functions, such as recognition, and control of emotions, and has made significant advances toward understanding the mechanism of association, if not yet of learning. We are well on the way to providing relevant insights, e.g., to saying what may be the biological basis of aggression, and whether there is a hydraulic mechanism and whether it is inherent." (Personal communication to Dr. T. Melnechuk who wrote me about it.)

[3]Not only the neurosciences and psychology but many other fields need to be integrated to create a *science of man*—fields such as paleontology, anthropology, history, the history of religions (myths and rituals), biology, physiology, genetics. The subject matter of the "science of man" is *man:* man as a total biologically and historically evolving human being who can be understood only if we see the interconnectedness between all his aspects, if we look at him as a process occurring within a complex system with many subsystems. The "behavioral sciences" (psychology and sociology), a term made popular by the Rockefeller Foundation's program, are interested mainly in *what* man *does* and how he can be *made to do* what he does, not *why* he does and in *who* he *is.* They have to a considerable extent become an obstacle to and a substitute for the development of an integrated science of man.

[4]Personal communications from H. von Foerster and from T. Melnechuk.

[5]I appreciate the authors' having allowed me to read their manuscripts before publication.

[6]I appreciate the authors' having allowed me to read their manuscripts before publication.

[7]In this discussion I shall only present the most important and generally accepted data. The work done in this field in the last twenty years is so enormous that it would be beyond my competence to enter into the hundreds of detailed problems that arise, nor would it be useful to quote the correspondingly large literature which can be found in a number of works mentioned in the text.

[8]According to some authors quoted above, the term "controlled" is quite inadequate. They see the response as one to processes going on in other parts of the brain, interacting with the specific area which is stimulated.

[9]The neocortex also exerts a predominantly exitatory effect on rage behavior. Cf. K. Ackert's experiments with the ablation of the neocortex of the temporal pole. (K. Ackert, 1967.)

[10]Cf. W. R. Hess (1954), J. Olds and P. Milner (1954), R. G. Heath, ed. (1962), J. M. R. Delgado (1967, 1969 with extensive Bibliography). Cf., furthermore, the recently published volume by V. H. Mark and F. R. Ervin (1970), which contains a clear and concise presentation, easily understood also by the layman in this field, of the essential data on neurophysiology as they refer to violent behavior.

[11]Cf. V. H. Mark and F. R. Ervin (1970).

[12]Cf. the detailed review *of* these studies in B. Kaada (1967).

[13]Bears are difficult to categorize in this respect. Some bears are omnivorous; they kill and eat the meat of smaller or wounded animals, but do not stalk them as, for instance, lions do. On the other hand, the polar bear, living under extreme climatic conditions, stalks seals in order to kill and eat them and thus can be considered a true predator.

[14]This point has been emphasized by Mark and Ervin (1970) and demonstrated by the studies of Egger and Flynn who stimulated the specific area in the lateral part of the hypothalamus and obtained behavior that reminded the observers of an animal stalking or hunting a prey. (M. D. Egger and J. P. Flynn, 1963.)

[15]An important fact is that many predatory animals—wolves, for instance—are unaggressive toward their own species. Not only in the sense that they do not kill each other—which may be sufficiently explained, as Lorenz does, as being due to the necessity to restrict the use of their ferocious weapons for the sake of the survival of the species—but also in the sense that they are quite friendly acid amiable in their social contact with each other.

[16]The whole question of the alleged predatory characteristics of man will be discussed in chapter 7.

[17]It may not be accidental that Hobbes, who portrayed man as a "wolf" to his fellowmen, lived in a sheep-raising country. It would be interesting to examine the origin and popularity of fairy tales dealing with the dangerous wolf, like *Little Red Riding Hood, in* this light.

6. Animal Behavior

THE SECOND CRITICAL field in which empirical data could contribute to establishing the validity of the instinctivistic theory of aggression is that of *animal behavior.* Animal aggression needs to be separated into three different types: (1) predatory aggression, (2) intraspecific aggression (aggression against animals of the same species), (3) interspecific aggression (aggression against animals of different species).

As indicated before, there is agreement among students of animal behavior (including Lorenz) that the behavioral patterns and neurological processes in *predatory* aggression are not analogous to the other types of animal aggression and hence should be treated separately.

As far as *interspecific* aggression is concerned, most observers agree that animals rarely destroy members of other species, except when in defense, i.e., when they feel threatened and cannot flee. This limits the phenomenon of animal aggression mainly to interspecific aggression, i.e., aggression between animals of the same species, the phenomenon which Lorenz deals with exclusively.

Intraspecific aggression has the following characteristics: *(a)* In most mammals it is not "bloody," it does not aim at killing, destruction or torture, but is essentially a threatening posture which serves as a warning. On the whole we find among most mammals a great deal of bickering, quarreling, or threatening behavior, but very little bloody fighting and destruction, as we find it in human behavior. *(b)* Only in certain insects, fish, birds, and, among mammals, rats, is destructive behavior customary. *(c)* The threatening behavior is a reaction to what the animal experiences as a threat to its vital interests and hence is defensive, in the sense of the neurophysiological concept of "defensive aggression." *(d)* There is no evidence that there is a spontaneous aggressive impulse in most mammals which is dammed up until it finds a more or less adequate occasion to be discharged. As far as animal aggression is defensive, it is based on certain phylogenetically patterned neuronal structures, and there would be no quarrel with Lorenz's position were it not for his hydraulic model and his explanation of human destructiveness and cruelty as innate and rooted in defensive aggression.

Man is the only mammal who is a large-scale killer and sadist. To answer the question why this is so is the purpose of the next chapters. In this discussion on animal behavior I want to show in detail that many animals fight their own species, but that they fight in a "nondisruptive," nondestructive way and that the data on the life of mammals in general and the prehuman primates in particular do not suggest the presence of an innate "destructiveness" which man is supposed to have inherited from them. Indeed, that if the human species had approximately the same degree of "innate" aggressiveness as that of chimpanzees living in their natural habitat, we would live in a rather peaceful world.

Aggression in Captivity

In studying aggression among animals and especially among the primates, it is important to begin with a distinction between their behavior while living in their own habitat and their behavior in captivity, that is, essentially, in zoos. Observations show that primates in the wild show little aggression, while primates in the zoo can show an excessive amount of destructiveness.

This distinction is of fundamental importance for the understanding of human aggression because man thus far in his history has hardly ever lived in his "natural habitat," with the exception of the hunters and food gatherers and the first agriculturalists down to the fifth millennium B.C. "Civilized" man has always lived in the "Zoo"—i.e., in various degrees of captivity and unfreedom—and this is still true, even in the most advanced societies.

I shall begin with a few examples of primates in the zoo, which have been well studied. The best known perhaps are the *hamadryas* baboons, which Solly Zuckerman studied at the London Zoo in Regents Park ("Monkey Hill") in 1929-1930. Their area, 100 feet long and 60 feet wide, was large by zoo standards, but extremely small compared with the natural range of their habitat. Zuckerman observed a great deal of tension and aggression among these animals. The stronger ones brutally and ruthlessly kept the weaker ones down, and even mothers would take food away from the hands of their babies. The principal victims were females and the young, who sometimes were injured or killed accidentally during the battles. Zuckerman saw one male bully deliberately attack a baby monkey twice, and this little monkey was found dead in the evening. Eight out of

sixty-one males died by violence, while many others died from disease. (S. Zuckerman, 1932.)

Other observations of primate behavior in zoos were made in Zurich by Hans Kummer (1951)[1] and in Whipsnade Park, England, by Vernon Reynolds (1961).[2] Kummer kept the baboons in an enclosure 15 by 27 yards in area. In Zurich, serious bites which caused nasty wounds were commonplace. Kummer made a detailed comparison of aggression among the animals in the Zurich Zoo and among those living in the wild, which he studied in Ethiopia, and found that the incidence of aggressive acts in the zoo was nine times as frequent in females and seventeen and a half times as frequent in adult males as it was in wild bands. Vernon Reynolds studied twenty-four rhesus monkeys in an enclosure which was octagonal, with each side only ten yards long. Although the space to which the animals were confined was smaller than that of Monkey Hill, the degree of aggression was less extreme. Nevertheless, there was more violence than in the wild; many animals were wounded and one female was hurt so badly that she had to be shot.

Of particular interest with regard to the influence of ecological conditions on aggression are various studies on rhesus monkeys *(Macaca mulata),* especially those by C. H. Southwick (1964), also C. H. Southwick, M. Beg, M. Siddiqi (1965). Southwick has found that environmental and social conditions invariably exert a major influence on the form and frequency of “agonistic” behavior (i.e., of behavior in response to conflict) in captive rhesus monkeys. His study permits distinguishing between environmental changes, i.e., number of animals in a given space, and social changes, i.e., the introduction of new animals into an existing group. He comes to the conclusion that decreasing space results in increasing aggression, but that changes in the social structure by the introduction of new animals “produced far more dramatic increases in aggressive interaction than did environmental changes.” (C. H. Southwick, 1964.)

Increased aggression by narrowing of space has resulted in more aggressive behavior among many other mammal species. L. H. Matthews, from the study of the literature and his own observations in the London Zoo, states that he could not find any cases among mammals of fighting to the death, except under crowded conditions. (L. H. Matthews, 1963.) An outstanding investigator of animal behavior, Paul Leyhausen, has emphasized the role of the disturbance of relative hierarchy among cats

when they were caged together in a small space. “The more crowded the cages, the less relative hierarchy there is. Finally a despot emerges, ‘pariahs’ appear, and they are driven to frenzy and all sorts of unnatural behavior by continuous and brutal attacks by all the others. The community turns into a spiteful mob. They all seldom relax, they never look at ease, and there is continuous hissing, growling and even fighting.” (P. Leyhausen, 1956.)[3]

Even the transitory crowding by fixed feeding stations resulted in increased aggression. In the winter of 1952, three American scientists, C. Cabot, N. Collias, and R. C. Guttinger (quoted by C. and W. M. S. Russell, 1968), observed deer near the Flag River, Wisconsin, and found that the amount of quarreling depended on the number of deer in the fixed area of the station, that is, on their density. When only from five to seven deer were present only one quarrel was seen per deer per hour. When from twenty-three to thirty deer were present the rate was 4.4 quarrels per deer per hour. Similar observations have been made with wild rats by the American biologist. J. B. Calhoun (1948).

It is important to note that the evidence shows that the presence of an ample *food supply* does *not* prevent increasing aggressiveness under conditions of crowding. The animals in the London Zoo were well fed, and yet crowding resulted in increased aggressiveness. It is also interesting that among rhesus monkeys even a 25 per cent reduction in food resulted in no change in agonistic interactions, according to Southwick’s observations, and that a 50 per cent reduction actually resulted in a significant decrease in agonistic behavior.[4]

From the studies of increased aggressiveness of primates in captivity—and studies of other mammals have shown the same result—it seems to follow that crowding is the main condition for increased violence. But “crowding” is only a label, and a rather deceptive one, because it does not tell us which factors in crowding are responsible for this increased aggression.

Is there a “natural” need for a minimum of private space?[5] Does crowding prevent the animal from exercising its innate need for exploration and free movement? Is crowding felt as a threat to the animal’s body to which it reacts with aggression?

While these questions can be fully answered only on the basis of further studies, Southwick’s findings suggest that there are at least two

different elements in crowding which must be kept apart. One is the *reduction of space;* the other is the *destruction of the social structure.* The importance of the second factor is clearly borne out by Southwick's observation, mentioned earlier, that the introduction of a strange animal usually creates even more aggression than crowding. Of course, often both factors are present, and it is difficult to determine which of the two is responsible for the aggressive behavior.

Whatever the specific blend of these factors is in animal crowding, each of them can generate aggression. The narrowing down of space deprives the animal of important vital functions of movement, play, and the exercise of its faculties which can develop only when it has to search for its own food. Hence the "space-deprived" animal may feel threatened by this reduction of its vital functions and react with aggression. The breakdown of the social structure of an animal group is, according to Southwick, even more of a threat. Every animal species lives within a social structure characteristic for this species. Whether hierarchical or not, it is the frame of reference to which the animal's behavior is adapted. A tolerable social equilibrium is a necessary condition for its existence. Its destruction through crowding constitutes a massive threat to the animal's existence, and intense aggression is the result one would expect, given the defensive role of aggression, especially when flight is impossible.

Crowding can occur under the conditions of existence in a zoo as was seen among Zuckerman's baboons. But more often the animals in a zoo are not crowded but suffer from restriction of space. Captive animals, although they are well fed and protected have "nothing to do." If one believes that satisfaction of all physiological needs is enough to provide for a feeling of well-being in an animal (and in man), their zoo existence should make them very content. But this parasitic existence deprives them of stimuli that would permit an active expression of their physical and mental faculties; hence they often become bored, dull, and apathetic. A. Kortlandt reports that "unlike *zoo* chimpanzees, which generally look increasingly dull and vacant with the years, the older chimpanzees among those living in the wild seemed to be more lively, more interested in everything, and more human." (A. Kortlandt, 1962.)[6] S. E. Glickman and R. W. Sroges (1966) make a similar point speaking of the constant "dull stimulus world" provided by zoo cages and the resulting "boredom."

Human Aggression and Crowding

If crowding is an important condition for animal aggression, the question suggests itself whether it is also an important source of human aggression. This idea is widely held and has been expressed by P. Leyhausen, who argues that there is no other remedy for "rebellion," "violence," and "neuroses" than "to establish the balance of numbers in human societies and quickly to find effective means of controlling them at the optimum level." (P. Leyhausen, 1965.)[7]

This popular identification of "*crowding*" with *population density* has created much confusion. Leyhausen, in his oversimplifying and conservative approach, ignores the fact that the problem of contemporary crowding has two aspects: the destruction of a viable social structure (particularly in the industrialized parts of the world), and the disproportion between the size of population and the economic and social basis for its existence, mainly in the non-industrialized parts of the world.

Man needs a social system in which he has his place and in which his relations to others are relatively stable and supported by generally accepted values and ideas. What has happened in modern industrial society is that traditions, and common values, and genuine social personal ties with others have largely disappeared. The modern mass man is isolated and lonely, even though he is part of a crowd; he has no convictions which he could share with others, only slogans and ideologies he gets from the communications media. He has become an atom (the Greek equivalent of "in-dividual" = indivisible), held together only by common, though often simultaneously antagonistic interests, and by the cash nexus. Emile Durkheim (1897) called this phenomenon "*anomie*" and found that it was the main cause of suicide which had been increasing with the growth of industrialization. He referred by anomie to the destruction of all traditional social bonds, due to the fact that all truly collective organization had become secondary to the state and that all genuine social life had been annihilated. He believed that people living in the modern political state are "a disorganized dust of individuals."[8] Another master of sociology, F. Tönnies (1926), undertook a similar analysis of modern societies and made the distinction between the traditional "community" *(Gemeinschaft)* and modern society *(Gesellschaft)* in which all genuine social bonds have disappeared.

That not population density as such, but lack of social structure, genuine common bonds and interest in life are the causes of human aggression can be shown by many examples. One of the most striking are the kibbutzim in Israel, which are very crowded, with little space for the individual and little privacy (this was even more the case years ago when the kibbutzim were poor). Yet there was an extraordinary lack of aggressiveness among their members. The same holds true for other "intentional communities" all over the world. Another example are countries like Belgium and Holland, two of the most densely populated parts of the world, whose population is nevertheless not characterized by special aggressiveness. There could hardly be more crowding than there was at the Woodstock or the Isle of Wight youth festivals, and yet both were remarkably free from aggressiveness. To take another example, Manhattan Island was one of the most densely populated places in the world thirty years ago, but it was not then, as it is today, characterized by excessive violence.

Anyone who has lived in a big apartment building where several hundred families live together knows that there are few places where a person has as much privacy and is as little intruded upon by the presence of next-door neighbors as in such a densely populated building. By comparison there is much less privacy in a small village where the houses are much more dispersed and population density is much smaller. Here the people are more aware of each other, watch and gossip about each other's private lives, and are constantly in each other's field of vision; the same holds true, although to a much lesser degree, for suburban society.

These examples tend to show that it is not crowding as such, but the social, psychological, cultural, and economic conditions under which it occurs that are responsible for aggression. It is obvious that overpopulation, i.e., population density *under conditions of poverty,* causes stress and aggression; the big cities of India, as well as the slums in American cities, are an example of this. Overpopulation and the resulting population density are malignant, when, due to the lack of decent housing, people lack the most elementary conditions for protection from immediate and constant intrusion by others. Overpopulation means that the number of people in a given society surpasses the economic basis for providing them with adequate food, housing, and meaningful leisure. There is no doubt that overpopulation has evil consequences and that the numbers must be

reduced to a level which is commensurate with the economic basis. But, in a society which has the economic basis to support a dense population, the density itself does not deprive the citizen of his privacy, and it does not expose him to constant intrusion of others.

An adequate standard of living, however, takes care only of the lack of privacy and constant exposure to others. It does not solve the problem of *anomie,* of the lack of *Gemeinschaft,* of the individual's need to live in a world that has human proportions, whose members know each other as persons. The *anomie* of industrial society can only be removed if the whole social and spiritual structure is changed radically: if the individual is not only adequately fed and housed, but the interests of society become identical with the interests of each individual; when the relationship to one's fellowman and the expression of one's powers, rather than the consumption of things and antagonisms to one's fellowman, become the principles which govern social and individual life. This is possible under the condition of high population density, but it requires radical rethinking of all our premises and radical social change.

It follows from these considerations that all analogies from animal to human crowding are of limited value. The animal has an instinctive "knowledge" of the space and the social organization it needs. It reacts instinctively with aggression in order to remedy a disturbance of its space and social structure. It has no other way to respond to threats to its vital interests in these respects. But man has many other ways. He can change the social structure, he can develop bonds of solidarity and of common values beyond what is instinctually given. The animal's solution to crowding is a biological instinctive one; man's solution is social and political.

Aggression in the Wild

Fortunately, there are a number of recent studies of animals living in the wild which clearly show that the aggressiveness to be observed under conditions of captivity is not present when the same animals live in their natural habitat.[9]

Among the monkeys, baboons have the reputation of a certain violence, and they have been carefully studied by S. L. Washburn and I. DeVore (1971). For reasons of space, I shall only mention Washburn and

DeVore's conclusion, namely that if the general social structure is not disturbed, there is little aggressive behavior: whatever aggressive behavior there is, is essentially one of gestures or threat postures. It is worthwhile to note, considering the previous discussion on crowding, they report observing no fighting between baboon troops that met at the waterhole. They counted more than four hundred baboons around a single waterhole at one time, and yet they did not observe any aggressive behavior among them. They also observed the baboons to be very unaggressive toward members of other animal species. This picture is confirmed and complemented by the study on the Chacma baboon *(Papio ursinus)* by K. R. L. Hall (1960).

The study of aggressive behavior among *chimpanzees,* the primates that most resemble man, is of particular interest. Until recent years almost nothing was known of their way of life in Equatorial Africa. However, three separate observations of chimpanzees in their natural habitat have by now been carried out and offer very interesting material with regard to aggressive behavior.

V. and F. Reynolds, who studied the chimpanzees of the Bodongo Forest, report an exceedingly low incidence of aggression. "During 300 observation hours, 17 quarrels involving actual fighting or displays of threat or anger were seen and none of these Listed more than a few seconds." (V. and F. Reynolds, 1965.) Only four of these seventeen quarrels involved two adult males. The observations of chimpanzees of the Gombe Stream Reserve by Jane Goodall are essentially the same: "Threatening behavior was seen on four occasions when a subordinate male tried to take food before a dominant one… Instances of attack were seldom observed and mature mules were seen fighting only on one occasion." (J. Goodall, 1965.) On the other hand, there are "a number of activities and gestures like grooming ;rod courting behavior," whose main function is apparently to establish and maintain good relations between the individual chimpanzees of the community. Their groups are largely temporary, and no stable relationships other than mother-infant could be found. (J. Goodall, 1965.) A dominance hierarchy proper was not observed among these chimpanzees, although there were seventy-two clear-cut dominance interactions observed.

A. Kortlandt mentions an observation concerning the uncertainty of chimpanzees which, as we shall see later, is very important for the

understanding of the evolution of man's "second nature," his character. He writes:

> All the chimpanzees I observed were cautious, hesitant creatures. This is one of the major impressions one carries away from studying chimpanzees at close range in the wild. Behind their lively, searching eyes one senses a doubting, contemplative personality, always trying to make sense out of a puzzling world. It is as if the certainty of instinct has been replaced in chimpanzees by the uncertainty of intellect—but without the determination and decisiveness that characterize man. (A. Kortlandt, 1962.)

Kortlandt notes that, as experiments with captive animals have shown, the behavior patterns of chimpanzees are much less innate than those of monkeys.[10]

From the van Lawick-Goodall observations I want to quote here a specific one because it offers a good example for Kortlandt's important statement about the hesitancy and lack of decisiveness in the behavior of the chimpanzee. This is the report:

> One day Goliath appeared some distance up the slope with an unknown pink female (in heat) close behind him. Hugo and I quickly put out a pile of bananas where both chimps could see the fruit and hid in the tent to watch. When the female saw our camp she shot up a tree and stared down. Goliath instantly stopped also, and looked up at her. Then he glanced at the bananas. He moved a short way down the slope, stopped, and looked back at his female. She had not moved. Slowly Goliath continued down, and this time the female climbed silently from the tree and we lost sight of her in the undergrowth. When Goliath looked around and saw that she had gone, he simply raced back. A moment later the female again climbed into a tree, followed by Goliath, who had every hair on end. He groomed her a while but every so often glanced toward camp. Although he could no longer see the bananas he knew that they were there, and since he had been away for about ten days his mouth was probably watering.
>
> In time he climbed down and once more walked toward us, stopping every few steps to stare back at the female. She sat

motionless, but Hugo and I both had the distinct impression that she wanted to escape from Goliath's company. When Goliath had come a lit farther down the slope the vegetation obviously hid the female from his view because he looked back and then quickly climbed a tree. She was still sitting there. He climbed down, walked another few yards, and then shot up another tree. Still there. This went on for a further five minutes as Goliath proceeded toward the bananas.

When he reached the camp clearing Goliath faced an added problem—there were no trees to climb and he couldn't see the female from the ground. Three times he stepped into the open, then turned and rushed back up the last tree. The female did not move. Suddenly Goliath seemed to make up his mind and, at a fast canter, raced over to the bananas. Seizing only one he turned back and raced to climb his tree again. Still the female sat on the same branch. Goliath finished his banana and, as though slightly reassured, hastened back to the pile of fruit, gathered up a whole armful, and rushed back to the tree. This time the female had gone; while Goliath gathered the bananas she had climbed down from her branch, repeatedly glancing toward him over her shoulder, and vanished silently.

Goliath's consternation was amusing to watch. Dropping his bananas he raced up to the tree where he had left her, peered all around, and then he too vanished into the undergrowth. For the next twenty minutes he searched for that female. Every few minutes we saw him climbing up yet another tree, staring in every direction; but he never found her and finally gave up, returned to camp, and looking quite exhausted, sat slowly eating bananas. Even so, he kept turning his head to gaze back up the slope. (J. van Lawick-Goodall, 1971.)

The incapacity of the male chimpanzee to come to a decision whether first to eat the bananas or mount the female is quite striking. If we observed this same behavior in a man, we would say that he was suffering from obsessional doubt, because the normal human would have no difficulty in acting according to the dominant impulse in his character structure; the oral receptive character would first eat the banana and postpone the satisfaction of his sexual impulse; the "genital character" would let the food wait until he was sexually gratified. In either case he would act without doubt or hesitancy. Since we can hardly assume that the male in this example is

suffering from an obsessional neurosis, the question why he behaves in this way seems to find its answer in Kortlandt's statement to which van Lawick-Goodall regrettably makes no reference.

Kortlandt describes the chimpanzee's remarkable tolerance toward the young as well as their deference toward the old, even when they no longer had physical power. Van Lawick-Goodall stresses the same characteristic:

> Chimpanzees normally show a good deal of tolerance in their behavior toward each other. This is especially true of males, less so with females. A typical instance of tolerance of a dominant to a subordinate animal occurred when an adolescent male was feeding from the only ripe cluster of fruits in a palm tree. A mature male climbed up but did not try to force the other away; he merely moved up beside the younger and the two fed side by side. Under similar circumstances a subordinate chimpanzee may move up to a dominant one, but before attempting to feed, it normally reaches out to touch the other on the lips, thigh, or genital area. Tolerance between males is particularly noticeable during the mating season, as for example on the occasion described above when seven males were observed copulating with one female with no signs of aggression between them; one of these males was an adolescent. (J. van Lawick-Goodall, 1971.)

On *gorillas* observed in the wild, G. B. Schaller reports that on the whole "interaction" between groups was peaceful. Aggressive bluff charges were made by one male as noted above, and "I once observed weak aggressiveness in the form of incipient charges towards intruders from another group by a female, a juvenile and an infant. Most intergroup aggressiveness was confined to staring and snapping." Serious aggressive attacks among gorillas were not witnessed by Schaller. This is all the more remarkable because the gorilla group home ranges not only overlapped, but seem to have been commonly shared amongst the gorilla population. Hence there would be ample occasion for friction. (G. B. Schaller, 1963, 1965.)

Special attention should be paid to van Lawick-Goodall's reports on feeding behavior because her observations have been used by a number of authors as an argument for the carnivorous or "predatory" character of chimpanzees. She states that "the chimpanzees of the Gombe Stream Reserve (and probably in most places throughout the range of the species as

a whole) are omnivorous… The chimpanzee is primarily vegetarian: that is, by far the greatest proportion of foods constituting his diet as a whole is vegetable." (J. van Lawick-Goodall, 1968.) There were certain exceptions to this rule. During the course of her field study she or her assistant observed chimpanzees feeding on the flesh of other mammals in twenty-eight instances. In addition, examining occasional samples of feces during the first two and a half years and regular samples in the last two and a half years, altogether the remnants of thirty-six different mammals were found in dung, over and above those the chimpanzees were observed eating. In addition she reports four instances during these years in which in three cases a male chimpanzee caught and killed an infant baboon, and in one the killing involved a, probably female, red colobus monkey. Furthermore, she observed sixty-eight mammals eaten (mostly primates) within forty-five months, or roughly one and a half per month, by a group of fifty chimpanzees. These figures confirmed the author's previous statement that the chimpanzees' "diet on the whole is vegetable" and hence that meat eating is exceptional. Yet, in her popular book *In the Shadow of Man*, the author states flatly that she and her husband "saw chimpanzees eating meat fairly frequently" (J. van Lawick-Goodall, 1971), but without quoting the qualifying data in her previous work that show the relative infrequency of meat eating. I stress this point because in publications after this study, comments abound emphasizing the "predatory" character of chimpanzees, based on van Lawick-Goodall's 1971 version of the data. But chimpanzees are, as many authors had stated, omnivorous; they live mainly on a vegetable diet. That they eat meat occasionally (in fact rarely), does not make them carnivorous and surely not predatory animals. But the use of the words "predatory" and "carnivorous" insinuate that man is born with an innate destructiveness.

Territorialism and Dominance

The popular picture of animal aggressiveness has been largely influenced by the concept of *territorialism.* Robert Ardrey's *Territorial Imperative* (1967) has left the general public with the implication that man is dominated by an instinct for defense of his territory, inherited from his animal ancestors. This instinct is supposed to be one of the main sources of animal and human aggressiveness. Analogies are easily drawn, and the

facile idea appeals to many that war is caused by the power of this same instinct.

The idea, however, is quite erroneous for a number of reasons. In the first place there are many animal species for whom the concept of territoriality does not apply. “Territoriality occurs only in higher animals such as the vertebrates and arthropods and even there in a very spotty fashion.” (J. P. Scott, 1968a.) Other students of behavior, like Zing Yang Kuo, are “rather inclined to think that the so-called ‘territorial defense’ is after all, merely a fancy name for the reaction patterns to strangers, flavored with anthropomorphism and nineteenth century Darwinism. Further and more systematic experimental explorations are necessary to decide this issue.” (Zing Yang Kuo, 1960.)

N. Tinbergen distinguishes between the territorialism of the species and that of the individual: “It seems certain that territories are selected mainly on the basis of properties to which the animals react innately. This makes all animals of the same species, or at least of the same population, select the same general type of habitat. However, the personal binding of a male to its own territory—a particular representative of the species’ breeding habitat—is the result of a learning process.” (N. Tinbergen, 1953.)

In the description of primates we have seen how often there is an overlap of territory. If the observation of apes teaches us anything, it is that various groups of primates are quite tolerant and flexible with regard to their territory and simply do not offer a picture that would permit the analogy to a society, jealously guarding its frontiers and forcibly preventing the entry of any “foreigner.”

The assumption that territorialism is the basis for human aggressiveness is erroneous for still another reason. Defense of territory has the function *of avoiding* the serious fighting that would *become necessary* if the territory were invaded to such an extent as to generate crowding. Actually the threat behavior in which territorial aggression manifests itself is the instinctively patterned way of upholding spatial equilibrium and peace. The instinctive equipment of the animal has the function that legal arrangements have in man. Hence the instinct becomes obsolete when other symbolic ways are available to mark a territory and to warn: no trespassing. It is also worth keeping in mind that, as we shall see later, most wars start for the purposes of gaining advantages of various kinds and not in defense against a threat to one’s territory—except in the ideology of the war makers.

Equally wrong impressions exist popularly about the concept of *dominance*. In many species, but by no means in all, one finds that the group is organized hierarchically. The strongest male takes precedence in food, sex, and grooming over other males on lower orders *of* the hierarchy.[11] But dominance, like territorialism, by no means exists in all animals and, again, not regularly in the vertebrates and mammals.

With regard to dominance among the nonhuman primates we find a great difference between some *of* the monkey species like the baboons and macaques, in whom one finds rather well-developed and strict hierarchical systems, and the apes with whom dominance patterns are much less strong. Of the mountain gorillas, Schaller reports:

> Definite dominance inter-actions were observed 110 times. Dominance was most frequently asserted along narrow trails, when one animal claimed the right of way, or in the choice of sitting place, when the dominant animal supplanted the subordinate one. Gorillas showed their dominance with a minimum of actions. Usually an animal low in the rank order simply moved out of the way at the mere approach or brief stare of a high-ranking one. The most frequently noted gesture involving bodily contact was a light tap with the back of the hand of a dominant individual against the body of a subordinate one. (G. B. Schaller, 1965.)

In their report on the chimpanzees of the Bodongo Forest, V. and F. Reynolds state:

> Although there was some evidence of differences in status between individuals, dominance interactions formed a minute fraction of the observed chimpanzee behavior. There was no evidence of a linear hierarchy of dominance among males or females; and there were no permanent leaders of groups. (V. and F. Reynolds, 1965.)

T. E. Rowell, in his study of baboons, argues against the whole concept of dominance and states that “circumstantial evidence suggests that hierarchical behavior is associated with environmental stress of various kinds and under stress it is the lower-ranking animal which first shows physiological symptoms (lower disease resistance, for example). If it is subordinate behavior that determines rank (rather than dominant behavior

as usually assumed), the stress factor can be seen as directly affecting all animals to different degrees dependent on their construction, producing physiological and behavioral (submitting behavior) changes at the same time, the latter in turn giving rise to a hierarchical social organization." (T. E. Rowell, 1966.) He comes to the conclusion "that the hierarchy appears to be maintained chiefly by subordinates' behavior patterns, and by the low—rather than the high-ranking animals." (T. E. Rowell, 1966.)

W. A. Mason also expresses strong reservations based on his studies of chimpanzees:

> The view taken here is that "dominance" and "subordination" are simply conventional designations for the fact that chimpanzees often stand in the relationship to each other of intimidator and intimidated. Naturally, we would expect the larger, stronger, more boisterous, and more aggressive animals in any group (being intimidating to almost everyone else) to display a kind of generalized dominance status. Presumably this accounts for the fact that in the wild, mature males are generally dominant over adult females, and they, in turn, are dominant over adolescents and juveniles. Apart from this observation, however, there is no indication that chimpanzee groups as a whole are organized hierarchically; nor is there any convincing evidence of an autonomous drive for social supremacy. Chimpanzees are willful, impulsive, and greedy, certainly a sufficient basis for the development of dominance and subordination, without the participation of specialized social motives and needs.
>
> Dominance and subordination can thus he regarded as the natural by-product of social intercourse, and but one facet of the relationship between two individuals… (W. A. Mason, 1970.)

For dominance, as far as it exists, the same comment applies which I have made with regard to territorialism. It functions to give peace and coherence to the group and to prevent friction that could lead to serious fighting. Man substitutes agreements, etiquette, and laws for the missing instinct.

Animal dominance has been widely interpreted as a fierce "bossiness" of the leader who enjoys having power over the rest of the group. It is true that among monkeys, for instance, the authority of the leader is often based on the fear he engenders in the others. But among the apes, as for instance

the chimpanzee, it is often not fear of the retaliatory power of the strongest animal, but his competence in leading the group which establishes his authority. As an example of this, mentioned earlier, Kortlandt (1962) reports about an old chimpanzee who retained his leadership because of his experience and wisdom, in spite of the tact that he was physically weak.

Whatever the role of dominance in animals is, it seems to be pretty clear that the dominant animal must constantly merit his role—that is to say, show his greater physical strength, wisdom, energy, or whatever it is that makes him accepted as a leader. A very ingenious experiment with monkeys, reported by J. M. R. Delgado (1967), suggests that if the dominant animal loses his distinguishing qualities even momentarily, his commanding role ends. In human history, when dominance becomes institutionalized and no longer a function of personal competence as is still the case in many primitive societies, it is not necessary for the leader to be in constant possession of his outstanding qualities, in fact it is not even necessary that he has them. The social system conditions people to see in the title, the uniform, or whatever else it may be, the proof that the leader is competent, and as long as these symbols, supported by the whole system, are present, the average man does not even dare to ask himself whether the emperor wears clothes.

Aggressiveness Among Other Mammals

Not only do primates show little destructiveness but all other mammals, predatory and non-predatory, fail to exhibit aggressive behavior such as would correspond to what it might be if Lorenz's hydraulic theory were correct.

Even among the most aggressive mammals, rats, the intensity of aggressiveness is not as great as Lorenz's examples indicate. Sally Carrighar has called attention to the difference between an experiment with rats which Lorenz quotes in favor of his hypothesis and another experiment which clearly shows that the critical point was not an innate aggressiveness of the rat but certain conditions that were responsible for greater or lesser aggressiveness:

> According to Lorenz, Steiniger put brown rats from different localities into a large enclosure which provided them with completely natural

living conditions. At first the individual animals seemed afraid of each other; they were not in an aggressive mood, but bit each other if they met by chance, particularly if two were driven towards each other along one side of the enclosure, so that they collided at speed.[12]

Steiniger's rats soon began to attack one another and fought until all but one pair were killed. The descendants of that pair formed a clan, which subsequently slaughtered every strange rat introduced into the habitat.

During the same years that this study was being conducted, John B. Calhoun in Baltimore was also investigating the behavior of rats. There were 15 rats in F. Steiniger's original population; 14 in Calhoun's—also strangers to one another. But Calhoun's enclosure was 16 times larger than Steiniger's and more favorable in other ways: "harborages" were provided for rats pursued by hostile associates (such refuges would probably exist in the wild), and all Calhoun's rats were identified by markings.

For 27 months, from a tower in the center of the large area, the movements of all the individual rats were recorded. After a few fights while getting acquainted, they separated into two clans, neither of which tried to eliminate the other. There was a good deal of crossing back and forth unchallenged—so often by some individuals that they were dubbed messengers. (S. Carrighar, 1968.)[13]

In contrast to the vertebrates and lower invertebrates, as J. P. Scott, one of the most outstanding students of animal aggression, has pointed out, aggression is very common among the arthropods, as the fierce fighting of lobsters indicates, and among social insects like wasps and certain spiders, in which the female attacks the male and eats him. A great deal of aggression can also be found among fish and reptiles. He writes:

> The comparative physiology of fighting behavior in animals yields the extremely important conclusion that the primary stimulation for fighting behavior is external; that is, there is no spontaneous internal stimulation which makes it necessary to an individual to fight irrespective of the outside environment. The physiological and emotional factors involved in the agonistic behavioral system are thus quite different from those involved in sexual and ingestive behavior.

And further on Scott states:

> Under natural conditions hostility and aggression in the sense of *destructive and maladaptive* (italics added) agonistic behavior are hard to find in animal societies.

Addressing himself to the specific problem of the spontaneous internal stimulation which Lorenz postulates, Scott writes:

> All of our present data indicate that fighting behavior among the higher mammals, including man, originates in external stimulation and that there is no evidence of spontaneous internal stimulation. Emotional and physiological processes prolong and magnify the effects of stimulation, but do not originate it. (J. P. Scott. 1968a.)[14]

Has Man an Inhibition Against Killing?

One of the most important points in the chain of Lorenz's explanations for human aggression is the hypothesis that man, in contrast to predatory animals, has not developed instinctive inhibitions against killing cospecifics; he explains this point by the assumption that man, like all non-predatory animals, has not dangerous natural weapons like claws, etc., and hence does not need such inhibitions; it is only because he has weapons that his lack of instinctive inhibitions becomes so dangerous.

But is it really true that man has no inhibitions against killing?

Man's historical record is so frequently characterized by killing that at first it would seem unlikely that he has any inhibitions. However, this answer becomes questionable if we reformulate our question to read: Has man any inhibitions against killing living beings, humans, and animals with whom he identifies to a greater or lesser degree, i.e., who are not complete "strangers" to him and to whom he is related by affective bonds?

There is some evidence that such inhibitions might exist and that a sense of guilt may follow the act of killing.

That the element of familiarity and empathy plays a role in the generation of inhibitions against killing animals can easily be detected from reactions to be observed in everyday life. Many people show a definite aversion to killing and eating an animal with which they are familiar or one

they have kept as a pet, like a rabbit or a goat. There are a large number of people who would not kill such an animal and to whom the idea of eating it is plainly repulsive. The same people usually have no hesitation in eating a similar animal where this element of empathy is lacking. But there is not only an inhibition against killing with regard to animals that are individually known, but also inasmuch as a sense of identity is felt with the animal as another living being. There might be a conscious or unconscious feeling of guilt related to the destruction of life, especially when there is a certain empathy. This sense of closeness to the animal and need to reconcile oneself to killing it is quite dramatically manifested in the rituals of the bear cult of Paleolithic hunters. (J. Mahringer, 1952.)[16]

The sense of identity with all living beings that share with man the quality of *life* has been made explicit as an important moral tenet in Indian thinking and has led to the prohibition against killing any animal in Hinduism.

It is not unlikely that inhibitions against killing also exist with regard to other humans, provided there is a sense of identity and empathy. We have to begin with the consideration that for primitive man the “stranger,” the person who does not belong to the same group, is often not felt as a fellowman, but as “something” with which one does not identify. There is generally greater reluctance to kill a member of the same group, and the most severe punishment for misdeeds in primitive society often was ostracism, rather than death. (This is still apparent in the punishment of Cain in the Bible.) But we are not restricted to these examples of primitive society. Even in a highly civilized culture like the Greek, the slaves were experienced as not being entirely human.

We find the same phenomenon in modern society. All governments try, in the case of war, to awaken among their own people the feeling that the enemy is not human. One does not call him by his proper name, but by a different one, as in the First World War when the Germans were called “Huns” by the British or “Boches” by the French. This destruction of the humanness of the enemy came to its peak with enemies of a different color. The war in Vietnam provided enough examples to indicate that many American soldiers had little sense of empathy with their Vietnamese opponents, calling them “gooks.” Even the word “killing” is eliminated by using the word “wasting.” Lieutenant Calley, accused and convicted for murdering a number of Vietnamese civilians, men, women, and children, in

My Lai, used as an argument for his defense the consideration that he was not taught to look at the soldiers of the NLF ("Viet Cong") as human beings but only as "the enemy." Whether that is sufficient defense or not is not the question here. It is certainly a strong argument, because it is true and puts into words the underlying attitude toward the Vietnamese peasants. Hitler did the same by calling "political enemies" he wanted to destroy *Untermenschen* ("subhumans"). It seems almost a rule, when one wants to make it easier for one's own side to destroy living beings of the other, to indoctrinate one's own soldiers with a feeling that those to be slaughtered are nonpersons.[16]

Another way of making the other a "nonperson" is cutting all affective bonds with him. This occurs as a permanent state of mind in certain severe pathological cases, but it can also occur transitorily in one who is not sick. It does not make any difference whether the object of one's aggression is a stranger or a close relative or a friend; what happens is that the aggressor cuts the other person off emotionally and "freezes" him. The other ceases to be experienced as human and becomes a "thing—over there." Under these circumstances there are no inhibitions against even the most severe forms of destructiveness. There is good clinical evidence for the assumption that destructive aggression occurs, at least to a large degree, in conjunction with momentary or chronic emotional withdrawal.

Whenever another being is not experienced as human, the act of destructiveness and cruelty assumes a different quality. A simple example will show this. If a Hindu or a Buddhist, for instance, provided he has a genuine and deep feeling of empathy with all living beings, were to see the average modern person kill a fly without the slightest hesitation, he might judge this act as an expression of considerable callousness and destructiveness; but he would be wrong in this judgment. The point is that for many people the fly is simply not experienced as a sentient being and hence is treated as any disturbing "thing" would be: it is not that such people are especially cruel, even though their experience of "living beings" is restricted.

[1]Quoted by C. and W. M. S. Russell (1968).

[2]Quoted by C. and W. M. S. Russell (1968).

[3]Cf., also, P. Leyhausen's discussion on crowding (1965), particularly his discussion of the influence of crowding on man.

[4]Similar phenomena can be found among humans where starvation conditions decrease rather than increase aggressiveness.

[5]Cf. T. E. Hall's interesting studies on human spatial requirements (1963, 1966).

[6]An example is a silver-haired old chimpanzee who remained the leader of the group even though he was physically far inferior to younger apes; apparently life in freedom, with all its many stimulations had developed a kind of wisdom in him which qualified him as a leader.

[7]The same thesis has been expressed by C. and W. M. S. Russell (1968, 1968a).

[8]A similar view was expressed by E. Mayo (1933).

[9]Field studies of nonhuman primates were first undertaken by H. W. Nissen (1931) with the study of the chimpanzee; by H. C. Bingham (1932), with the study of the gorilla, and by C. R. Carpenter (1934), with the study of the howler monkey. For almost twenty years after these studies, the entire subject of primate field studies lay dormant. Although a number of brief field studies were made in the intervening years, a new series of long-term careful observations did not begin until the middle of the fifties with the establishment of the Japan Monkey Center of Kyoto University and S. A. Altman's study of the rhesus monkey colony on Cayo Santiago. Today there are well over fifty individuals engaged in such studies. The best collection of papers on primate behavior is to be found in I. DeVore, ed. (1965) with a very comprehensive Bibliography. Among the papers in this volume I want to mention here are the one by K. R. L. Hall and I DeVore (1965); the one on "Rhesus Monkeys in North India" by C. H. Southwick, M. Beg, and M. R. Siddiqi, (1965); "The Behavior of the Mountain Gorilla" by G. B. Schaller (1965); "The Chimpanzees of the Bodongo Forest" by V. and F. Reynolds (1965), and "Chimpanzees of the Gombe Stream Reserve" by Jane Goodall (1965). Goodall continued with the same research until 1965 and published her further findings combined with the earlier ones under her married name, Jane van Lawick-Goodall (1968). In the following I have also used A. Kortlandt (1962) and K. R. L. Hall (1964).

[10]K. J. and C. Haves of the Yerkes Laboratories of Primate Biology in Orange Park, Florida, who raised a chimpanzee in their home and systematically submitted it to a "forced" humanizing education, measured its I.Q. as 125 at the age of two years and eight months. (C. Hayes, 1951; and K. J. Hayes and C. Hayes, 1951.)

[11]One has more rarely drawn a parallel from this hierarchy to the “instinctive” root, for dictatorship than one has from territorialism to patriotism, although the logic would be the same. The reason for this different treatment lies probably in that it a less popular to construct an instinctive basis for dictatorship than for “patriotism.”

[12]Most animal psychologists, incidentally, would not call “completely natural” the conditions provided by any enclosure—especially if the enclosure were so small that individuals collided when racing along the fence.

[13]Cf. S. A. Barnett and M. M. Spencer (1951) and S. A. Barnett (1958, 1958a).

[14]Zing Yang Kuo, in his experimental studies of animal fighting in mammals, has come to similar conclusions (1960).

[15]I believe a similar reason underlies the Jewish ritual of not eating meat with milk. Milk and its products are symbols of life; they symbolize the living animal. The prohibition to eat meat and milk products together seems to indicate the same tendency to make a sharp distinction between the live animal and the dead animal used as food.

[16]Tom Wicker in reflections on the wholesale slaughter of hostages and inmates by the forces that stormed the prison in Attica, New York, wrote a very thoughtful column making the same point. He refers to a statement issued by New York State Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller after the massacre at Attica which begins with the sentence: “Our hearts go out to the families of the hostages who died at Attica,” then Wicker writes: “Much of what went wrong at Attica—and of what is wrong at most other American prisons and ‘corrections facilities’—can be found in the simple fact that neither in that sentence nor in any other did the governor or any official extend a word of sympathy to the families of the dead prisoners.

“True, at that time, it was thought that the deaths of the hostages had been caused by the prisoners, rather than—as is now known—by the bullets and buckshot of those ordered by the state authorities to go over the walls shooting. But even had the prisoners, instead of the police, been the killers of hostages, they still would have been human beings, certainly their mothers and wives and children still would have been human beings. But the official heart of the state of New York and its officials did not go out to any of them.

“That is the root of the matter; prisoners, particularly black prisoners, in all too many cases are neither considered nor treated as human beings. And since they are not, neither are their families.”

Wicker continues: “Time and again, members of the special observers’ group that tried to negotiate a settlement at Attica heard the prisoners plead that they, too, were human beings and wanted above all to be treated as such. Once, in a negotiating session through a steel-barred gate that

divided prisoner-held and state-held territory, Assistant Corrections Commissioner Walter Dunbar told the prisoner leader, Richard Clark: ‘In 30 years. I’ve never lied to an inmate.’

“‘But how about to a man?’ Clark said quietly.” (*The New York Times*, September 18, 1971.)

7. Paleontology

Is Man One Species?

IT SHOULD BE RECALLED that Lorenz's use of animal data referred to intraspecific aggression and not to aggression between different animal species. The question is: Can we be really sure that humans in their relationship to other humans experience each other as cospecifics and hence react with genetically prepared behavior patterns toward cospecifics? Do we not see, on the contrary, that among many primitive peoples even a man of another tribe or living in a neighboring village some miles away is looked upon as a complete stranger or even not human, and hence there is no empathy with him? Only in the process of social and cultural evolution has the number of people who are accepted as being human increased. It seems that there are good reasons to assume that man does not experience his fellowman as a member of the same species, because his recognition of another man is not facilitated by those instinctive or reflex-like reactions by which either smell, form, certain colors, etc., give immediate evidence of species identity among animals. In fact, in many animal experiments, it has been demonstrated that even the animal can be deceived or made to feel uncertain about who are his cospecifics.

Precisely because man has less instinctive equipment than any other animal, he does not recognize or identify cospecifics as easily as animals. For him different language, customs, dress, and other criteria perceived by the mind rather than by instincts determine who is a cospecific and who is not, and any group which is slightly different is not supposed to share in the same humanity. From this follows the paradox that man, precisely because he lacks instinctive equipment, also lacks the experience of the identity of his species and experiences the stranger as if he belonged to another species; in other words, *it is man's humanity that makes him so inhuman.*

If these considerations are correct, Lorenz's case would collapse, because all his ingenious constructions and the conclusions he draws are based on aggression among members of the same species. In this case an entirely different problem would arise, namely that of the innate

aggressiveness of animals toward members of *other* species. As far as this interspecific aggression in concerned, the data on animals show, if anything, less evidence that such interspecific aggression is genetically programmed except in cases where the animal is threatened or among predatory animals. Could a case be made for the hypothesis that man is the descendent of a predatory animal? Could we assume that man, although not another man's wolf, is another man's sheep?

Is Man a Predatory Animal?

Is there any evidence to suggest that man's ancestors were predatory?

The earliest hominid who may have been one of man's ancestors is the *Ramapithecus* who lived in India about fourteen million years ago.[1] The form of his dental arcade was similar to those of other hominids and much more manlike than that of present-day apes; even though he may have eaten meat in addition to his mainly vegetable diet, it would be absurd to think of him as a predatory animal.

The earliest hominid fossils we know after *Ramapithecus* are those of *Australopithecus robustus* and the more advanced *Australopithecus africanus*, found by Raymond Dart in South Africa in 1924 and believed to date from almost two million years ago. *Australopithecus* has been the subject of a great deal of controversy. The great majority of paleoanthropologists today accept the thesis that the australopithecines were hominids, while a few investigators, such as D. R. Pilbeam and E. L. Simons (1965), assume that *A. africanus* is to be considered as the first appearance of *Homo*.

In the discussion of the australopithecines, much has been made of their use of tools, in order to prove that they were human or at least man's ancestors. Lewis Mumford, however, has convincingly pointed out that the importance of tool-making as sufficient identification of man is misleading and rooted in the bias inherent in the current concept of technics. (L. Mumford, 1967.) Since 1924 new fossils have been discovered, but their classification is controversial, as well as the question whether *Australopithecus* was to any considerable extent a meat eater, hunter, or tool maker.[2] Nevertheless, most investigators agree that A. africanus was an omnivorous animal, characterized by the flexibility of his diet. B. G. Campbell (1966) comes to the conclusion that *Australopithecus* ate small

reptiles; birds; small mammal,, such as rodents; roots, and fruits. He ate such small animals as he could capture without weapons or setting traps. Hunting, on the contrary, presupposes cooperation and an adequate technique which came into existence only much later and coincides with the emergence of man in Asia around 500.000 B.C.

Whether *Australopithecus* was a hunter or not, it is beyond any doubt that the hominids like their pongid ancestors were not predatory animals with the instinctual and morphological equipment which characterizes carnivorous predators such as lions and wolves.

In spite of this unequivocal evidence, not only the dramatizing Ardrey, but even a serious scholar like D. Freeman has attempted to identify *Australopithecus* as the paleontological "Adam" who brought the original sin of destructiveness into the human race. Freeman speaks of the australopithecines as a "carnivorous adaptation," having "predatory, murderous and cannibalistic predilections. Thus paleoanthropology has, during the last decade revealed a phylogenetic basis for the conclusions about human aggression which have been reached by psychoanalytic research into man's nature." He summarizes: "In broad anthropological perspective then, it may be argued that man's nature and skills and, ultimately, human civilization, owe their existence to the kind of predatory adaptation first achieved by the carnivorous *Australopithecinae* on the grasslands of southern Africa in the Lower Pleistocene." (D. Freeman, 1964.)

In the discussion following the presentation of his paper, Freeman does not seem to be so convinced: "So, in the light of recent paleoanthropological discoveries the hypothesis has now been advanced that certain aspects of human nature (including *possibly* aggressivity and cruelty) may well be connected with the special predatory and carnivorous adaptations which were so basic to hominid evolution during the Pleistocene period. This, in my view, is a *hypothesis that deserves to be investigated* scientifically and dispassionately, for it concerns matters about which we are at present most ignorant." (D. Freeman, 1964. Italics added.) What, in the paper, was the *fact* that paleoanthropology revealed conclusions about human aggression has become, in the discussion, a *hypothesis* that "deserved to be investigated."

Such investigation is obscured by a confusion to be found in Freeman —as well as the works of a number of other authors—among "predatory,"

“carnivorous,” and “hunting.” Zoologically, predatory animals are clearly defined. They are the families of cats, hyenas, dogs, and bears, and they are characterized as having toes with claws, and sharp canines. The predatory animal finds his food by attacking and killing other animals. This behavior is genetically programmed, with only a marginal element of learning, and furthermore, as has been mentioned before, predatory aggression has a neurologically different basis from aggression as a defense reaction. One cannot even call the predatory animal a particularly aggressive animal, for in its relations with its cospecies it is sociable and even amiable, as for instance, we have seen the behavior of wolves. Predatory animals (with the exception of bears that are mainly vegetable feeders and quite unfitted for the chase) are exclusively meat eaters. But not all meat-eating animals are predatory. The omnivorous animals that eat vegetables *and* meat do not for this reason belong to the order of the Carnivora. Freeman is aware that “the term ‘carnivorous’ when it is used to refer to the behavior of the hominidae has to have a meaning *quite distinct* from that which it has when applied to species within the order Carnivora.” (J. D. Carthy, F. J. Ebling, 1964. Italics added.) But why then call hominids carnivorous, instead of omnivorous? The resulting confusion only helps establish the following equation in the mind of the reader: meat eater = carnivorous = predatory, ergo, man’s hominid ancestor was a predatory animal equipped with the instinct to attack other animals, including other men; ergo, man’s destructiveness is innate, and Freud is right. *Quod erat demonstrandum!*

All we may conclude about *A. africanus* is that he was an omnivorous animal in whose diet meat played a more or less important role and that he killed animals as a source of food if they were small enough. A diet of meat does not transform the hominid into a predatory animal. Furthermore, it is by now a widely accepted fact, expressed by Sir Julian Huxley and others, that diet—vegetable or meat—has nothing to do with generating aggressiveness.

Nothing justifies the assumption that *Australopithecus* had the instincts of a predatory animal which, provided “he” was man’s ancestor, could be made responsible for “predatory” genes in man.

[1]Whether or not *Ramapithecus* was a hominid and a direct ancestor of man is still controversial. (Cf. the detailed presentation of the argument in D. Pilbeam, 1970.) Almost all paleontological data are based on a good deal of speculation and, hence, are highly controversial. By following one author

one may come to a different picture than by following another. However, for our purpose the many disputed details of human evolution are not essential, and as far as the major points of development are concerned, I have tried to present what seems to be the consensus of most students in this field. But even with regard to major stages of human evolution I omit some controversy from the context in order not to make it too burdensome. For the following analysis I have used mainly these works: D. Pilbeam (1970), J. Napier (1970), J. Young (1971), I. Schwidetzki (1971), S. Tax, ed. (1960), B. Rensch, ed. (1965), A. Roe and G. C. Simpson (1958. 1967), A. Portman (1965), S. L. Washburn and P. Jay, eds. (1968), B. G. Campbell (1966), and a number of papers, some of which are indicated in the text.

[2]S. L. Washburn and F. C. Howell (1960) write that it is very unlikely that the early and small-bodied australopithecines, who augmented their basically vegetable diet with meat, did much killing, "whereas the later and larger forms which probably replaced them could cope with small and/or immature animals. There is no evidence to suggest that such creatures were capable of preying on the large herbivorous mammals so characteristic of the African Pleistocene." The same point of view was expressed by Washburn in an earlier paper (1957) where he wrote that "it is probable that the Australopithecines were themselves the game rather than the hunters." Later on, however, he suggested that the hominids, including the australopithecines "might possibly" have been hunters. (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.)

8. Anthropology

IN THIS CHAPTER I shall present detailed data on primitive hunters and food gatherers, the Neolithic agriculturists, and the new urban societies. In this way the reader is put in a position to judge for him or herself whether the data support the conventional thesis that the more primitive the man, the more aggressive he is. In many cases they are the findings of a younger generation of anthropologists in the last ten years, and contrasting older views are not yet corrected in the minds of most nonspecialists.

"Man the Hunter"—The Anthropological Adam?

If the *predatory* quality of man's hominid ancestors cannot be made responsible for his innate aggressiveness, can there be a human ancestor, a *prehistorical Adam* who is responsible for man's "fall"? This is what S. L. Washburn, one of the greatest authorities in this field, and his coauthors believe, and they identify this "Adam" as man, *the hunter.*

Washburn starts from the premise that in view of the fact that man has lived during 99 per cent of his history as a hunter, we owe our biology, psychology, and customs to the hunters of the time past:

> In a very real sense our intellect, interests, emotions, and basic social life—all are evolutionary products of the success of the hunting adaptation. When anthropologists speak of the unity of mankind, they are stating that the selection pressures of the hunting and gathering way of life were so similar and the result so successful that populations of *Homo sapiens* are still fundamentally the same everywhere. (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.)[1]

The crucial question, then, is: What is this "psychology of the hunter"?

Washburn calls it a "carnivorous psychology" fully developed by the Middle Pleistocene, around 500,000 years ago or even earlier:

> The world view of the early human carnivore must have been very different from that of his vegetarian cousins. The interests of the latter

> could be satisfied in a small area, and other animals were of little moment, except for the few which threatened attack. But desire for meat leads animals to know a wider range and to learn the habits of many animals. Human territorial habits and psychology are fundamentally different from those of apes and monkeys. For at least 300,000 years (perhaps twice that) carnivorous curiosity and aggression have been added to the inquisitiveness and dominance striving of the ape. This carnivorous psychology was fully formed by the middle Pleistocene and it may have had its beginnings in the depredations of the australopithecines. (S. L. Washburn and V. Avis, 1958.)

Washburn identifies the "carnivorous psychology" with a drive for and pleasure in killing. He writes: "Man takes pleasure in hunting other animals. Unless careful training has hidden the natural drives, men enjoy the chase and the kill. In most cultures *torture and suffering are made public spectacles for the enjoyment of all."* (S. L. Washburn and V. Avis, 1958. Italics added.)

Washburn insists: "Man has a carnivorous psychology. It is easy to teach people to kill, and it is hard to develop customs which avoid killing. Many human beings enjoy seeing other human beings suffer or enjoy the killing of animals … Public beatings and torture are common in many cultures." (S. L. Washburn, 1959.) In the last two statements Washburn implies that not only killing, but cruelty as well, are part of hunting psychology.

What are Washburn's arguments in favor of this alleged innate joy in killing and cruelty?

One argument is "killing as a sport" (he speaks of "killing" as a sport, rather than of "hunting," which would be more correct). He writes: "Perhaps this is most easily shown by the extent of the efforts devoted to maintain killing as a sport. In former times royalty and nobility maintained parks where they could enjoy the sport of killing, and today the United States government spends many millions of dollars to supply game for hunters." (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.) A related example is: "people who use the lightest fishing tackle to prolong the fish's futile struggle, in order to maximize the personal sense of mastery and skill." (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.)

Washburn points to the popularity of war:

> And until recently war was viewed in much the same way as hunting. Other human beings were simply the most dangerous game. War has been far too important in human history for it to be other than pleasurable for the males involved. It is only recently with the entire change in the nature and conditions of war, that this institution has been challenged, that the wisdom of war as a normal part of national policy or as an approved road to personal social glory has been questioned. (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.)

In connection with this, Washburn states:

> The extent to which the biological bases for killing have been incorporated into human psychology may be measured by the ease with which boys can be interested in hunting, fishing, fighting, and games of war. It is not that these behaviors are inevitable, but they are easily learned, satisfying, and have been socially rewarded in most cultures. The skills for killing and the pleasures of killing are normally developed in play, and the patterns of play prepare the children for their adult roles. (S. L. Washburn and C. S. Lancaster, 1968.)

Washburn's claim that many people enjoy killing and cruelty is true as far as it goes, but all it means is that there is sadistic individuals and sadistic cultures; but there are others that are not sadistic. One will find, for instance, that sadism is much more frequently to be found among frustrated individuals and social classes who feel powerless and have little pleasure in life, for example the lower class in Rome who were compensated for their material poverty and social impotence by sadistic spectacles, or the lower middle class in Germany from whose ranks Hitler recruited his most fanatical following; it is also to be found in ruling classes that feel threatened in their dominant position and their property[2] or in suppressed groups that thirst for revenge.

The idea that hunting produces pleasure in torture is an unsubstantiated and most implausible statement. Hunters as a rule do not enjoy the suffering of the animal, and in fact a sadist who enjoys torture would make a poor hunter; nor do fishermen as a rule use the procedure mentioned by Washburn. There is also no evidence for the assumption that primitive

hunters were motivated by sadistic or destructive impulses. On the contrary, there is some evidence to show that they had an affectionate feeling for the killed animals and possibly a feeling of guilt for the kill. Among Paleolithic hunters, the bear was often addressed as “grandfather” or was looked upon as the mythical ancestor of man. When the bear was killed, apologies were offered; before he was eaten, a sacred meal took place with the bear as an “honored guest,” before whom were placed the best dishes; finally the bear was ceremoniously buried. (J. Mahringer, 1952.)[3]

The psychology of hunting, including that of the contemporary hunter calls for extensive study, but a few observations can be made even in this context. First of all, one must distinguish between hunting as a sport of ruling elites (for instance, the nobility in a feudal system) and all other forms of hunting, such as that of primitive hunters, farmers protecting their crops or chickens, and individuals who love to hunt.

“Elite hunting” seems to satisfy the wish for power and control, including a certain amount of sadism, characteristic of power elites. It tells us more about feudal psychology than about the psychology of hunting.

Among the motivations of the primitive professional and the modern passionate hunter, at least two kinds must be distinguished. The first have their roots in the depth of human experience. In the act of hunting, a man becomes, however briefly, part of nature again. He returns to the natural state, becomes one with the animal, and is freed from the burden of the existential split: to be part of nature *and* to transcend it by virtue of his consciousness. In stalking the animal he *and* the animal become equals, even though man eventually shows his superiority by the use of his weapons. In primitive man this experience is quite conscious. Through disguising himself as an animal, and considering an animal as his ancestor, he makes this identification explicit. For modern man, with his cerebral orientation, this experience of oneness with nature is difficult to verbalize and to be aware of, but it is still alive in many human beings.

Of at least equal importance for the passionate hunter is an entirely different motivation, that of enjoyment in his skill. It is amazing how many modern authors neglect this element of skill in hunting, and focus their attention on the act of killing. After all, hunting requires a combination of many skills and wide knowledge beyond that of handling a weapon.

This point has been discussed in detail by William S. Laughlin, who also starts out with the thesis that “hunting is the master behavior pattern of

the human species." (W. S. Laughlin, 1968.) Laughlin, however, does not even mention pleasure in killing or cruelty as part of the hunting behavior pattern, but describes it in these general terms: "Hunting has placed a premium upon inventiveness, upon problem solving, and has imposed a real penalty for failure to solve the problem. Therefore it has contributed as much to advancing the human species as to holding it together within the confines of a single variable species." (W. S. Laughlin, 1968.)

Laughlin points out, and this is a very important point to be kept in mind in view of the conventional overemphasis on tools and weapons:

> Hunting is obviously an instrumental system in the real sense that something gets done, several ordered behaviors are performed with a crucial result. The technological aspects, the spears, clubs, handaxes, and all the other objects suitable for museum display, are essentially meaningless apart from the context in which they are used. They do not represent a suitable place to begin analysis because their position in the sequence is remote from the several preceding complexes. (W. S. Laughlin, 1968.)[4]

The efficiency of hunting is to be understood not on the basis of the advancement of its technical bases, but by the increasing skill of the hunter:

> There is ample documentation, though surprisingly few systematic studies, for the postulate that primitive man is sophisticated in his knowledge of the natural world. This sophistication encompasses the entire macroscopic zoological world of mammals, marsupials, reptiles, birds, fish, insets, and plants. Knowledge of tides, meteorological phenomena generally, astronomy, and other aspects of the natural world are also well developed among some variations between groups with reference to the sophistication and extent of their knowledge, and to the areas in which they have concentrated… I will here only cite the relevance of this sophistication to the hunting behavior system and to its significance for the evolution of man … man, the hunter, was learning animal behavior and anatomy, including his own. He domesticated himself first and then turned to other animals and to plants. In this sense, hunting was the school of learning that made the human species self-taught. (W. S. Laughlin, 1968.)

In short, the motivation of the primitive hunter was not pleasure in killing; but the learning and optimal performance of various skills, i.e., the development of man himself.[5]

Washburn's argument regarding the ease with which boys can be interested in hunting, fighting, and games of war ignores the fact that boys can be easily induced to any kind of pattern that is culturally accepted. To conclude that this interest of boys in popularly accepted behavior patterns proves the innate character of the pleasure in killing testifies to a remarkably naive attitude in matters of social behavior. Furthermore it should be noted that there are a number of sports—from Zen sword fighting to fencing, judo, and karate—in which it is quite obvious that their fascination does not lie in the pleasure to kill, but in the skill they allow to be displayed.

Equally untenable is Washburn and Lancaster's statement that "almost every human society has regarded killing members of certain other human societies as desirable." (Washburn and Lancaster. 1968.) This is a repetition of a popular cliché, and the only source offered for it is the paper by D. Freeman (1964), discussed above, which is biased by the Freudian view. The facts are that, as we shall see further on, wars among primitive hunters are characteristically unbloody, and mostly not aimed at killing. To claim that the institution of war has only recently been challenged is, of course, to ignore the history of a wide range of philosophical and religious teaching, especially that of the Hebrew prophets.

If we do not follow Washburn's reasoning, the question remains whether there are other patterns which hunting behavior has engendered. It seems, indeed, that there are two behavior patterns that might have been genetically programmed through hunting behavior: cooperation and sharing. Cooperation between members of the same band was a practical necessity for most hunting societies; so was the sharing of food. Since meat is perishable in most climates except that of the Arctic, it could not be preserved. Luck in hunting was not equally divided among all hunters; hence the practical outcome was that those who had luck today would share their food with those who would be lucky tomorrow. Assuming hunting behavior led to genetic changes, the conclusion would be that modern man has an innate impulse for cooperation and sharing, rather than for killing and cruelty.

Unfortunately, man's record of cooperation and sharing is rather spotty, as the history of civilization shows. One might explain this by the fact that hunting life did not produce genetic changes, or that the impulses for sharing and cooperation have become deeply repressed in cultures whose organization discouraged these virtues and instead encourages ruthless egotism. Nevertheless, one might still speculate whether the tendency to cooperate and to share which we find in many societies today outside of the modern industrialized world do not point to the innate character of these impulses. In fact, even in modern warfare, in which the soldier by and large does not feel much hate against his enemy, and only exceptionally indulges in cruelty,[6] we find a remarkable degree of cooperation and sharing. While in civilian life most people do not risk their lives to save another man's life or share their food with others, in war this is a daily occurrence. Perhaps one might even go further and suggest that one of the factors which make war attractive is precisely the possibility of practicing deeply buried human impulses which our society when at peace, considers—in fact, although not ideologically—to be foolish.

Washburn's ideas on hunting psychology is only one example of the bias in favor of the theory of man's innate destructiveness and cruelty. In the whole field of the social sciences one can observe a high degree of partisanship when it comes to questions immediately related to actual emotional and political problems. Where the ideology and interest of a society are concerned, objectivity usually yields to bias. Modern society, with its almost limitless readiness for destruction of human lives for political and economic ends, can best defend itself against the elementary human question of its right to do so by the assumption that destructiveness and cruelty are not engendered by our social system, but are innate qualities in man.

Aggression and Primitive Hunters

Fortunately, our knowledge of hunting behavior is not restricted to speculations; there is a considerable body of information about still existing primitive hunters and food gatherers to demonstrate that hunting is not conducive to destructiveness and cruelty, and that primitive hunters are relatively unaggressive when compared to their civilized brothers.

The question arises whether we can apply our knowledge of these primitive hunters to prehistoric hunters, at least to those living since the emergence of modern man, *"Homo sapiens sapiens"* about forty thousand to fifty thousand years ago.

The fact is that very little is known about man since his emergence, and not too much even about *H. sapiens sapiens* in his hunting-gathering stage. Thus a number of authors quite correctly have cautioned against drawing conclusions from modern primitives as to their prehistorical ancestors. (J. Deetz, 1968.)[7] Nevertheless, as G. P. Murdock says, interest in contemporary hunters exists "because of the light they may shed on the behavior of Pleistocene man"; and most of the other participants in the symposium on *Man the Hunter* (R. B. Lee and I. DeVore, eds., 1968) would seem to be in accord with this formulation. Even though we cannot expect prehistoric hunter-gatherers to have been identical to the most primitive contemporary hunters and food gatherers, it must be considered that (1) *H. sapiens sapiens* was anatomically and neurophysiologically not different from man today, and (2) the knowledge of still existing primitive hunters is bound to contribute to the understanding of at least one crucial problem in regard to prehistoric hunters: the influence of hunting behavior on personality and on social organization. Aside from this, the data on primitive hunters demonstrates that qualities often attributed to human nature, such as destructiveness, cruelty, associability—in short, those of Hobbes's "natural man," are remarkably missing in the least "civilized" men!

Before discussing still existing primitive hunters, a few remarks need to be made about the Paleolithic hunter. M. D. Sahlins writes:

> In selective adaptation to the perils of the Stone Age, human society overcame or subordinated such primate propensities as selfishness, indiscriminate sexuality, dominance and brute competition. It substituted kinship and cooperation for conflict, placed solidarity over sex, morality over might. In its earliest days it accomplished the greatest reform in history, the overthrow of human primate nature, and thereby secured the evolutionary future of the species. (M. D. Sahlins, 1960.)

There are certain direct data on the life of the prehistoric hunter to be found in animal cults which point to the fact that he lacked the alleged innate destructiveness. As Mumford has pointed out, the cave paintings associated with the life of prehistoric hunters did not exhibit any fighting between men.[8]

Despite the caution required in making analogies, however, the most impressive data are certainly those of still existing hunters-food-gatherers. Colin Turnbull, a specialist in this study, has reported:

> In the two groups known to me, there is an almost total lack of aggression, emotional or physical, and this is borne out by the lack of warfare, feuding, witchcraft, and sorcery.
>
> I am also not convinced that hunting is itself an aggressive activity. This is something that one must see in order to realize: the act of hunting is not carried out in an aggressive spirit at all. Due to the consciousness of depleting natural resources, there is actually a regret at killing life. In some cases, this killing may even bear an element of compassion. My experience with hunters has shown them to be very gentle people, and while it is certainly true that they lead extremely hard lives, this is not the same thing as being aggressive. (C. M. Turnbull, 1965.)[9]

None of the other participants in the discussion with Turnbull contradicted him.

The most comprehensive description of the anthropological findings of primitive hunters and food gathers is offered by E. R. Service in *The Hunters.* (E. R. Service, 1966.) His monograph includes all such societies, with the exception of those sedentary groups along the northwest coast of North America which exist in a particularly bountiful environment, and those other hunting-gathering societies that become extinct so soon after contact with civilization that our knowledge of them is too fragmentary.[10]

The most obvious and probably most crucial characteristic of the hunting-gathering societies is their nomadism, required by the foraging economy which leads to loose integration of families into a “band” society. As for their needs—in contrast to modern man who requires a house, an automobile, clothing, electricity, and so on—for the primitive hunter “food, and the few devices employed in obtaining it, is the focus of economic life

… in a more fundamental sense than it is in more complicated economies." (E. R. Service, 1966.)

There is no full-time specialization of labor other than the age and sex divisions that are found in any family. Food consists to a smaller extent of meat (perhaps about 25 per cent), while the gathering of seeds, roots, fruits, nuts, and berries constitute the main diet, furnished by the work of women. As M. J. Meggitt says: "A vegetarian stress seems to be one of the prime distinguishing features of hunting and fishing, and gathering economics." (M. J. Meggitt, 1964.) Only the Eskimos live by hunting and fishing alone, and Eskimo women do most of the fishing.

There is broad cooperation of men in the hunt, which is a normal concomitant of the low state of technological development in band society. "For several reasons having to do with the very simplicity of the technology and the lack of control over the environment, many hunting-gathering peoples are quite literally the most leisured peoples in the world." (E. R. Service, 1966.)

Economic relations are especially instructive. Service writes:

> We are accustomed, because of the nature of our own economy, to think that human beings have a "natural propensity to truck and barter," and that economic relations among individuals or groups are characterized by "economizing," by "maximizing" the result of effort, by "selling dear and buying cheap." Primitive peoples do none of these things, however; in fact, most of the time it would seem that they do the opposite. They "give things away," they admire generosity, they expect hospitality, they punish thrift as selfishness.
>
> And strangest of all, the more dire the circumstances, the more scarce (or valuable) the goods, the less "economically" will they behave and the more generous do they seem to be. We are considering, of course, the form of exchange among persons *within* a society and these persons are, in band society, all kinsmen of some sort. There are many more kinsmen in a band than there are people in our own society who actually maintain close social relations: but an analogy can be drawn with the economy of a modern family, for it, too, contrasts directly with the principles ascribed to the formal economy. We "give" food, do we not, to our children? We "help" our brothers and "provide for" aged parents. Others do, or have done, or will do, the same for us.

At the generalized pole, because close social relations prevail, the emotions of love, the etiquette of family life, the morality of generosity all together condition the way goods are handled, and in such a way that the economic attitude toward the goods is diminished. Anthropologists have sometimes attempted to characterize the actual transaction with words like “pure gift” or “free gift” in order to point up the fact that this is not trade, but barter, and that the sentiment involved in the transaction is not one of a balanced exchange. But these words are not quite evocative of the actual nature of the act; they are even somewhat misleading.

Once Peter Freuchen was handed some meat by an Eskimo hunter and responded by gratefully thanking him. The hunter was cast down, and Freuchen was quickly corrected by an old man: “You must not thank for your meat: it is your right to get parts. In this country, nobody wishes to be dependent on others. Therefore, there is nobody who gives or gets gifts, for thereby you become dependent. With gifts you make slaves just as with whips you make dogs.”[11]

The word “gift” has overtones of charity, not of reciprocity. In no hunting-gathering society is gratitude expressed, and, as a matter of fact, it would be wrong even to praise a man as “generous” when he shares his game with his campmates. On another occasion he could be said to be generous, but not in response to a particular incident of sharing, for then the statement would have the same implication as an expression of gratitude: that the sharing was unexpected, that the giver was not generous simply as a matter of course. It would be right to praise a man for his hunting prowess on such an occasion, but not for his generosity. (E. R. Service, 1966.)

Of particular importance, both economically and psychologically is the question of poverty. One of the most widespread clichés today is that the love for property is an innate trait in man. Usually the confusion is made between property in instruments one needs for one’s work and in certain private items like ornaments, etc. and property in the sense of owning the means of production, that is to say, things through whose exclusive possession other people can be made to work for oneself. Such means of production in the industrial society are essentially machines or capital to be

invested in machine production. In primitive society the means of production are land and hunting areas.

> In no primitive band is anyone denied access to the resources of nature —no individual owns these resources…
>
> The natural resources on which the hands depend are collective, or communal, property, in the sense that the territory might he defended by the whole hand against encroachment by strangers. Within the band, all families have equal rights to acquire these resources. Moreover, kinsmen in neighboring bands are allowed to hunt and gather at will, at least on request. The most common instance of apparent restriction in rights to resources occurs with respect to nut- or fruit-bearing trees. In some instances, particular trees or clumps of trees are allocated to individual families of the hand. This practice is more a division of labor, however, than a division of property, for its purpose seems to be to prevent the waste of time and effort that would occur if several scattered families headed for the same area. It is simply to conventionalize the allotted use of the several groves, inasmuch as trees are much more permanently located than game or even wild vegetables and grasses. At any rate, even if one family acquired many nuts or fruits and another failed, the rules of sharing would apply so that no one would go hungry.
>
> The things that seem most like private property are those that are made and used by individual persons. Weapons, knives and scrapers, clothing, ornaments, amulets, and the like, are frequently regarded as private property among hunters and gatherers… But it could be argued that in primitive society even these personal items are not private property in the true sense. Inasmuch as the possession of such things is dictated by their use, they are functions of the division of labor rather than an ownership of the “means of production.” Private ownership of such things is meaningful only if some people possess them and others do not—when, so to speak, an exploitative situation becomes possible. But it is hard to imagine (and impossible to find in ethnographic accounts) a case of some person or persons who, through some accident, owned no weapons or clothing and could not borrow or receive such things from more fortunate kinsmen. (E. R. Service, 1966.)

Social relations among the members of hunting-gathering society are characterized by the absence of what is called “dominance” among animals. Service states:

> Hunting-gathering bands differ more completely from the apes in this matter of dominance than do any other kinds of human society. There is no peck-order based on physical dominance at all, nor is there any superior-inferior ordering based on other sources of power such as wealth, hereditary classes, military or political office. The only consistent supremacy of any kind is that of a person of greater age and wisdom who might lead a ceremony.
>
> Even when individuals possess greater status or prestige than others, the manifestation of the high status and the prerogatives are the opposite of ape-like dominance. Generosity and modesty are required of persons of high status in primitive society, and the rewards they receive are merely the love or attentiveness of others. A man, for example, might be stronger, faster, braver, and more intelligent than any other member of the band. Will he have higher status than the others? Not necessarily. Prestige will be accorded him only if these qualities are put to work in the service of the group—in hunting, let us say—and if he therefore produces more game to give away, and if he does it properly, modestly. Thus, to simplify a bit, greater strength in ape society results in greater dominance, which results in more food and mates and any other things desired by the dominant one; in primitive human society greater strength must be used in the service of the community, and the person, to earn prestige, must literally sacrifice to do so, working harder for less food. As for the mates, he ordinarily has but one wife just like the other men.
>
> It seems that the most primitive human societies are at the same time the most egalitarian. This must he related to the fact that because of rudimentary technology this kind of society depends on cooperation more fully more of the time than any other. Apes do not regularly cooperate and share, human beings do—that is the essential difference. (E. R. Service, 1966.)

Service gives a picture of the kind of authority we find among the hunter-gatherer peoples. In these societies there is of course a need for

administration of group action:

> Administration is the role authority assumes with respect to problems of concerted group action. It is what we ordinarily mean by the word "leadership." The necessities for administration of group action and close coordination are varied and numerous in hunting-gathering societies. They would include such usual things as camp movements, a collaborative hunting drive, and particularly any kind of skirmishing with enemies. But despite the obvious significance of leadership in such activities, a hunting-gathering society is, as in other matters, distinctive in that it has no formal leadership of the sort that we see in later stages of cultural development. There is no permanent office of headman: leadership moves from one person to another depending on the type of activity that is being planned. For example, one very old man might he the favorite for planning a ceremony because of his great ritual knowledge, but another person, younger and more skilled at hunting, might he the normal leader of the hunting party.
>
> Above all, there is no leader or headman in the sense usually associated with the word *chief*.[12] (E. R. Service, 1966.)

This lack of hierarchy and chiefs is all the more noteworthy because it is a widely accepted cliché that such control institutions its are to be found in virtually all civilized societies are based on a genetic inheritance from the animal kingdom. We have seen that among chimpanzees the dominance relationships are rather mild, but they are nevertheless there. The social relationships of primitive people show that man is not genetically prepared for this kind of dominance-submission psychology. An analysis of historical society, with five or six thousand years of exploitation of the majority by a ruling minority, shows very clearly that the dominance-submission psychology is an adaptation to the social order, and not its cause. For the apologists of a social order based on control by an elite, it is of course very convenient to believe that the social structure is the outcome of an innate need of man and, hence, natural and unavoidable. The egalitarian society of the primitive shows that this is just not so.

The question must arise how primitive man protects himself against asocial and dangerous members, in the absence of an authoritarian or bureaucratic authoritarian regime. There are several answers to this

question. First of all, much of the control of behavior is achieved merely in terms of custom and etiquette. But assuming that custom and etiquette did not prevent individuals from asocial behavior, what are the sanctions against them? The usual sanction is a general withdrawal from the culprit and a diminished degree of courtesy toward him; there is gossip and ridicule; in extreme cases, ostracism. If a person constantly misbehaves, and his behavior harms groups other than his own, his own group may even decide to kill him. However, these cases are extremely rare, and most problems are solved by the authority of the older and wiser males in the group.

These data clearly contradict the Hobbesian picture of man's innate aggression which would lead to the war of every man against every man, unless the state monopolized violence and punishment, thus satisfying indirectly the thirst for revenge against the wrongdoers. As Service points out,

> The fact of the matter, of course, is that band societies are not riven into pieces even though there are no formal adjudicative bodies to hold them together…
>
> But although feuds and warfare are relatively rare in band societies, they do consistently *threaten* and there must be some way of stopping them or of preventing their spread. Often they begin as mere quarrels between individuals, and for this reason it is important to stop them early. Within a given community the adjudication of a quarrel between two persons will ordinarily be handled by an elder who is a common relative of them both. It would be ideal if this person were in the same relationship to each one of the quarreling men, for then it would be evident that he would not be so likely to take sides. But of course this is not always the case, nor is it always possible that the person in this kinship status position might want to adjudicate. Sometimes one person is clearly enough in the right and the other in the wrong, or one person popular and the other unpopular, that the public becomes the adjudicator and the case is settled as soon as this common opinion becomes well-known.
>
> When quarrels are not settled in any of the above ways, then some form of contest is held, preferably a game, that takes the place of an outright battle. Wrestling or head-butting contests are typical forms of

quasi-dueling in Eskimo society. It is done in public and the winner is considered by the public to have won his case. Particularly interesting is the famous Eskimo song duel: the weapons used are words, “little, sharp words, like the wooden splinters which I hack off with my axe.”

Song duels are used to work off grudges and disputes of all orders, save murder. An East Greenlander, however, may seek his satisfaction for the murder (if a relative through a song contest if he is physically too weak to gain his end, or if he is so skilled in singing as to feel certain of victory. Inasmuch as East Greenlanders get so engrossed in the mere artistry of singing as to forget the cause of the grudge, this is understandable. Singing skill among these Eskimos equals or outranks gross physical prowess.

The singing style is highly conventionalised. The successful singer uses the traditional patterns of composition which he attempts to deliver with such finesse as to delight the audience to enthusiastic applause. He who is most heartily applauded is “winner.” To win a song contest brings no restitution in its train. The sole advantage is in prestige. (E. A. Hoebel, 1954.)

One of the advantages of the song duel carried on at length is that it gives the public time to come to a consensus about who is correct or who should admit guilt in the dispute. Ordinarily, people have some idea of whose side they are on, but as in most primitive communities the unanimity of the community as a whole is felt to be so desirable that it takes a while before the people can find out where the majority opinion lies. Gradually more people are laughing a little harder at one of the duelist’s verses than at the other’s until it becomes apparent where the sympathy of the community lies, and then opinion quickly becomes unanimous and the loser retires in discomfiture. (E. R. Service, 1966.)

Among other hunting societies private quarrels are not solved as charmingly as by the Eskimos, but by a spear-throwing duel:

When a dispute is between an accuser and a defendant, which is commonly the case, the accuser ritually hurls the spears from a prescribed distance, while the defendant dodges them. The public can applaud the speed, force, and accuracy of the accuser as he hurls his

> spears, or then can applaud the adroitness with which the defendant dodges them. After a time unanimity is achieved as the approval for one or the other's skill gradually becomes overwhelming. When the defendant realizes that the community is finally considering him guilty, he is supposed to fail to dodge a spear and allow himself to be wounded in some fleshy part of his body. Conversely, the accuser simply stops throwing the spears when he becomes aware that public opinion is going against him. (C. W. M. Hart and A. R. Pilling, 1960.)

Primitive Hunters – The Affluent Society?

A very relevant point—and one even interesting for the analysis of contemporary industrial society—is made by M. D. Sahlins with regard to the whole question of economic scarcity among primitive hunters and the modern attitude toward the problem of what constitutes poverty. He argues against the premise that led to the idea of the aggressiveness of primitive hunters, namely that life in the Paleolithic period was one of extreme scarcity and constant confrontation with starvation. In contrast, Sahlins emphasizes that the society of primitive hunters was the "original affluent society."

> By common understanding an affluent society is one in which all the people's wants are easily satisfied; and though we are pleased to consider this happy condition the unique achievement of industrial civilization, a better case can be made for hunters and gatherers, even many of the marginal ones spared to ethnography. For wants are "easily satisfied," either by producing much or desiring little and there are, accordingly, two possible roads to affluence… Adopting a Zen strategy a people can enjoy an unparalleled material plenty, although perhaps only a low standard of living. That I think describes the hunters. (M. D. Sahlins, 1968.)[13]

Sahlins makes some further very pertinent statements:

> Scarcity is the peculiar obsession of a business economy, the calculable condition of all who participate in it. The market makes freely available a dazzling array of products—all these "good things"

are within a man's reach—but never his grasp, for one never has enough to buy everything. To exist in a market economy is to live out a double tragedy, beginning in inadequacy and ending in deprivation… We stand sentenced to life at hard labor. It is from this anxious vantage that we look back on the hunter. But if modern man, with all his technical advantages, still hasn't got the wherewithal, what chance has this naked savage with his puny bow and arrow'? Having equipped the hunter with bourgeois impulses and Paleolithic tools, we judge his situation hopeless in advance.[14]

Scarcity is not an intrinsic property of technical means. It is a relation between means and ends. We might entertain the empirical possibility that hunters are in business for their health, a finite objective, and bow and arrow are adequate to that end. A fair case can be made that hunters often work much less than we do, and rather than a grind the food quest is intermittent, leisure is abundant, and there is more sleep in the daytime per capita than in any other conditions of society… Rather than anxiety, it would seem, the hunters have a confidence born of affluence, of a condition in which all the people's wants (such as they are) are generally easily satisfied. This confidence does not desert them during hardship. [This attitude has been expressed by the philosophy of the Penan of Borneo: "If there is no food today, there will be tomorrow."] (M. D. Sahlins, 1968.)

Sahlin's remarks are important because he is one of the few anthropologists who do not accept the frame of reference and value judgments of present-day society as necessarily valid. He shows to what degree social scientists distort the picture of societies tinder their observation by judging them from what seems to be the "nature" of economics, just as they come to conclusions about the nature of man from the data, if not of modern man, at least of man as we know him through most of his civilized history.

Primitive Warfare

Although defensive aggression, destructiveness, and cruelty are not ordinarily the cause of war, these impulses manifest themselves in warfare. Hence some data on primitive warfare will help to complete the picture of primitive aggression.

Meggitt gives a summation of the nature of warfare among the Walbiri of Australia, which Service states may be accepted as an apt characterization of warfare in hunting-gathering societies generally:

> Walbiri society did not emphasize militarism—there was no class of permanent or professional warriors; there was no hierarchy of military command; and groups rarely engaged in wars of conquest. Every man was (and is still) a potential warrior, always armed and ready to defend his rights: but he was also an individualist, who preferred to fight independently. In some disputes kinship ties aligned men into opposed camps, and such a group may occasionally have comprised all the men of a community. But there were no military leaders, elected or hereditary, to plan tactics and ensure that others adopted the plans. Although some men were respected as capable and courageous fighters and their advice was valued, other men did not necessarily follow them. Moreover, the range of circumstances in which fights occurred was in effect so limited that men knew and could employ the most effective techniques without hesitation. This is still true today even of young bachelors.
>
> There was in any case little reason for all-out warfare between communities. Slavery was unknown: portable goods were few; and the territory seized in a battle was virtually an embarrassment to the victors, whose spiritual ties were with other localities. Small-scale wars of conquest against other tribes occurred occasionally, but I am sure that they differed only in degree from intra-tribal and even intra-community fights. Thus the attack on the Waringari that led to the occupation of the water holes in the Tanami area involved only Waneiga men—a few score at most: and I have no evidence that communities ever entered into a military alliances, either to oppose other Walbiri communities or other tribes. (M. J. Meggitt, 1960.)

Technically speaking, this kind of conflict among primitive hunters can be described as war; in this sense one may conclude that “war” has always existed within the human species, and hence, that it is the manifestation of an innate drive to kill. This reasoning, however, ignores the profound differences in the warfare of lower and of higher primitive cultures[15] as well as the warfare of civilized cultures. Primitive warfare, particularly that

of the lower primitives, was neither centrally organized nor led by permanent chieftains; it was relatively infrequent; it was not war of conquest nor was it bloody war aimed at killing as many of the enemy as possible. Most civilized war, in contrast, is institutionalized, organized by permanent chieftains, and aims at conquest of territory and/or acquisition of slaves and/or booty.

In addition, and perhaps most important of all, is the frequently overlooked fact that there is no important economic stimulus among primitive hunter-gatherers to full-scale war.

> The birth-death ratio in hunting-gathering societies is such that it would be rare for population pressure to cause some part of the population to fight others for territorial acquisition. Even if such a circumstance occurred it would not lead to much of a battle. The stronger, more numerous, group would simply prevail, probably even without a battle, if hunting rights or rights to some gathering spot were demanded. In the second place there is not much to gain by plunder in hunting-gathering society. All bands are poor in material goods and there are no standard items of exchange that serve as capital or as valuables. Finally, at the hunting-gathering level the acquisition of captives to serve as slaves for economic exploitation—a common cause of warfare in more modern times—would be useless, given the low productivity of the economy. Captives and slaves would have a difficult time producing more than enough food to sustain themselves. (E. R. Service, 1966.)

The overall picture of warfare among primitive hunter-gatherers given by Service is supported and supplemented by a number of other investigators, some of whom are quoted in the following paragraphs.[16] D. Pilbeam stresses the absence of war, in contrast to occasional feuds, together with the role of example rather than power among the leaders in a hunting society, and the principle of reciprocity and generosity, and the central role of cooperation. (D. Pilbeam, 1970.)

U. H. Stewart comes to the following conclusion concerning territoriality and warfare:

> There have been many contentions that primitive bands own territories or resources and fight to protect them. Although I cannot assert that this is never the case, it is probably very uncommon. First, the primary groups that comprise the larger maximum bands intermarry, amalgamate if they are too small or split off if too large. Second, in the cases reported here, there is no more than a tendency for primary groups to utilize special areas. Third, most so-called "warfare" among such societies is no more than revenge for alleged witchcraft or continued interfamily feuds. Fourth, collecting is the main resource in most areas, but I know of no reported defense of seed areas. Primary bands did not fight one another, and it is difficult to see how a maximum band could assemble its manpower to defend its territory against another band or why it should do so. It is true that durian trees, eagle nests, and a few other specific resources were sometimes individually claimed, but how they were defended by a person miles away has not been made clear. (U. H. Stewart, 1968.)

H. H. Turney-High (1971) comes to similar conclusions. He stressed that while the experiences of fear, rage, and frustration are universal, the art of war develops only late in human evolution. Most primitive societies were not capable of war because war requires a sophisticated level of conceptualization. Most primitive societies could not imagine an organization necessary to conquer or defeat a neighbor. Most primitive wars are nothing but armed melees, not wars at all. According to Rapaport, Turney-High's work did not find a very friendly reception among anthropologists because he stressed that secondary accounts of battles written by professional anthropologists were hopelessly inadequate and sometimes downright misleading; he believed that primary sources were more reliable, even when they were by amateur ethnologists generations ago.[17]

Quincy Wright's monumental work (1,637 pages including an extensive Bibliography) presents a thorough analysis of warfare among primitive people based on the statistical comparison of the main data to be found among six hundred and fifty-three primitive peoples. The shortcoming of his analysis lies in the fact that he is more descriptive than analytical in the classification of primitive societies as well as of different kinds of warfare. Nevertheless, his conclusions are of considerable interest

because they show a statistical trend that corresponds to the results of many other authors: “The collectors, lower hunters and lower agriculturalists are the least warlike. The higher hunters and higher agriculturalists are more warlike, while the highest agriculturalists and the pastors are the most warlike of all.” (Q. Wright, 1965.) This statement confirms the idea that war-likeness is not a function of man’s natural drives that manifest themselves in the most primitive form of society, but of his development in civilization. Wright’s data show that the more division of labor there is in a society, the more warlike it is, and that societies with class-systems are the most warlike of all peoples. Eventually his data show that the greater the equilibrium among groups and between the group and its physical environment, the less war-likeness one finds, while frequent disturbances of the equilibrium result in an increase in warlikeness.

Wright differentiates among four kinds of war—defensive, social, economic, and political. By defensive war, he refers to the practice of people who have no war in their mores and who fight only if actually attacked, “in which case they make spontaneous use of available tools and hunting weapons to defend themselves, but regard this necessity as a misfortune.” By social war he refers to people with whom war “is usually not very destructive of life.” (This warfare corresponds to Service’s description of war among hunters.) Economic and political wars refer to people who make war in order to acquire women, slaves, raw materials, and land and/or, in addition, for the maintenance of a ruling dynasty or class.

Almost everybody reasons: if civilized man is so warlike, how much more warlike must primitive man have been![18] But Wright’s results confirm the thesis that the most primitive men are the least warlike and that war-likeness grows in proportion to civilization. If destructiveness were innate in man, the trend would have to be the opposite.

A view similar to Wright’s has also been expressed by M. Ginsberg, who writes:

> It would seem that war in this sense grows with the consolidation of groups and economic development. Among the simplest peoples we ought to speak rather of feuds, and these unquestionably occur on grounds of abduction of women, or resentments of trespass or personal injury. It must be conceded that these societies are peaceful by comparison with the more advanced of the primitive peoples. But

> violence and fear of violence are there and fighting occurs, though that is obviously and necessarily on a small scale. The facts are not adequately known, and if they do not support the view of a primitive idyllic peace, they are perhaps compatible with the view of those who think that primary or unprovoked aggressiveness is not an inherent element of human nature. (E. Glover and M. Ginsberg, 1934.)

Ruth Benedict (1959) makes the distinction between “socially lethal” and “non-lethal” wars. In the latter, the aim is not that of subjugating other tribes to the victor as masters and profiteers; although there was much warfare among North American Indians,

> The idea of conquest never arose in aboriginal North America, and this made it possible for almost all these Indian tribes to do a very extreme thing: to separate war from the state. The state was personified in the Peace Chief, who was a leader of public opinion in all that concerned the in-group and in his council. The Peace Chief was permanent, and though no autocratic ruler he was often a very important personage. But he had nothing to do with war. He did not even appoint the war chiefs or concern himself with the conduct of war parties. Any man who could attract a following led a war party when and where he would, and in some tribes he was in complete control for the duration of the expedition. But this lasted only till the return of the war party. The state, according to this interpretation of war, had no conceivable interest in these ventures, which were only highly desirable demonstrations of rugged individualism turned against an out-group where such demonstrations did not harm the body politic. (R. Benedict, 1959.)

Benedict’s point is important because it touches upon the connection of war, state, and private property. Socially non-lethal war is to a large extent an expression of adventurousness and the wish to have trophies and be admired, but it was not invoked by the impulse to conquer people or territory, to subjugate human beings, or to destroy the basis for their livelihood. Benedict comes to the conclusion that “elimination of war is not so uncommon as one would think from the writings of political theorists of the prehistory of war… It is a complete misunderstanding to lay this havoc

[war] to any biological need of man to go to war. The havoc is manmade." (R. Benedict, 1959.) Another outstanding anthropologist, E. A. Hoebel (1958) characterizes warfare among early North American Indians in these terms: "They come closer to William James's Moral Equivalents of War. They release aggressions harmlessly: they provide exercise, sport and amusement without destruction; and only mildly is there any imposition of desires by one party on the other." (E. A. Hoebel, 1958.) He comes to the general conclusion that man's propensity to war is obviously not an instinct, because it is an elaborate cultural complex. He gives as an interesting example the pacifistic Shoshones and the violent Comanches who in 1600 were still culturally and racially one.

The Neolithic Revolution[19]

The detailed description of the life of primitive hunters and food gatherers has shown that man—at least since he fully emerged fifty thousand years ago—was most likely not the brutal, destructive, cruel being and hence not the prototype of "man the killer" that we find in more-developed stages of his evolution. However, we cannot stop there. In order to understand the gradual development of man the exploiter and the destroyer, it is necessary to deal with the development of man during the period of early agriculture and, eventually, with his transformation into a builder of cities, a warrior, and a trader.

From the emergence of man, approximately half a million years ago to about 9000 B.C., man did not change in one respect: he lived from what he gathered or hunted, but did not produce anything new. He was completely dependent on nature and did not himself influence or transform it. This relationship to nature changed radically with the invention of agriculture (and animal husbandry) which occurred roughly with the beginning of the Neolithic period, more precisely, the "Protoneolithic" period as archeologists call it today—from 9000 to 7000 B.C.—in an area stretching over one thousand miles from western Iran to Greece, including parts of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and the Anatolian Plateau in Turkey. (It started later in Central and Northern Europe.) For the first time man made himself, within certain limits, independent of nature by using his inventiveness and skill to produce something beyond that which nature had thus far yielded to him. It was now possible to plant more seed, to till more

land, and to breed more animals, as the population increased. Surplus food could be slowly accumulated to support craftsmen who devoted most of their time to the manufacture of tools, pottery, and clothing.

The first great discovery made in this period was the cultivation of wheat and barley, which had been growing wild in this area. It was discovered that by putting seed of these grasses into the earth, new plants would grow; that one could select the best seed for sowing, and eventually the accidental crossing of varieties was observed, which produced grains very much larger than the seeds of the wild grasses. The process of development from wild grasses to high-yielding modern wheat is not yet fully known. It involved gene mutations, hybridization, and chromosome doubling, and it has taken thousands of years to achieve the artificial selection by man on the level of present-day agriculture. For man in the industrial age, accustomed to looking down on non-industrialized agriculture as a primitive and rather obvious form of production, the Neolithic discoveries may not seem comparable to the great technical discoveries of our day, of which he is so proud. Yet the fact that the expectation that seed would grow was proved correct by results gave rise to an entirely new concept: man recognized that he could use his will and intention to *make* this happen, instead of things just "happening." It would not be exaggerated to say that the discovery of agriculture was the foundation for all scientific thinking and later technological development.

The second discovery was that of animal breeding which was made in the same period. Sheep were already domesticated in the ninth millennium in northern Iraq, and cattle and pigs around 6000 B.C. Sheep and cattle-raising resulted in additional food supply: milk and a greater abundance of meat. The increased and more stable food supply permitted a sedentary, instead of a nomadic form of life, and led to the construction of permanent villages and towns.[20]

In the Protoneolithic period tribes of hunters invented and developed a new settled economy based on the domestication of plants and animals. Although the earliest remains of domesticated plants do not yet much antedate 7000 B.C., "the standard of domestication reached and the variety of crops grown presupposes a long prehistory of earlier agriculture which may well go back to the beginning of the Protoneolithic, about 9000 B.C." (J. Mellaart, 1967.)[21]

It took about 2000 to 3000 years before a new discovery was made, necessitated by the need to store foodstuff: the art of pottery (baskets were made earlier). With the invention of pottery, the first technical invention had been made, which led to the insight into chemical processes. Indeed, “building a pot was a supreme instance of creation by man.” (V. G. Childe, 1936.)[22] Thus one can distinguish within the Neolithic period itself one “aceramic” stage, i.e., a period in which pottery had not been invented, and the ceramic stage. Some older villages in Anatolia, such as the older levels of Hacilar, were aceramic while Çatal Hüyük was a town that had rich pottery.

Çatal Hüyük was one of the most highly developed Neolithic towns in Anatolia. Although only a relatively small part has been excavated since 1961, it has already yielded the most important data for the understanding of Neolithic society in its economic, social, and religious aspects.[23]

Since the beginning of the excavations, ten levels have been dug out, the oldest dated c. 6500 B.C.

> After 5600 B.C. the old mound of Çatal Hüyük was abandoned, for what reasons is not known, and a new site was founded across the river, Çatal Hüyük West. This appears to have been occupied for at least another 700 years until it also was deserted, without, however, any obvious signs of violence or deliberate destruction. (J. Mellaart, 1967.)

One of the most surprising features of Çatal Hüyük is the degree of its civilization:

> Çatal Hüyük could afford luxuries such as obsidian mirrors, ceremonial daggers, and trinkets of metal beyond the reach of most of its known contemporaries. Copper and lead were smelted and worked into beads, tubes and possibly small tools, thus taking the beginnings of metallurgy back into the seventh millennium. Its stone industry in local obsidian and imported flint is the most elegant of the period; its wooden vessels are varied and sophisticated, its woolen textile industry fully developed. (J. Mellaart, 1967.)

Make-up sets for women and very attractive bracelets for men and women were found in the burial sites. They knew the art of smelting copper and

lead. The use of a great variety of rocks and minerals shows, according to Mellaart, that prospecting and trade formed a most important item of the city's economy.

In spite of this developed civilization, the social structure seems to have lacked certain elements characteristic of much later stages of evolution. Apparently there was little class distinction between rich and poor. While, according to Mellaart, social inequality is suggested by the sizes of buildings, equipment, and burial gifts, "this is never a glaring one." Indeed, looking at the plans of the excavated section of the city one finds that the difference in size of the buildings is very small, and negligible when compared with the difference in later urban societies. Childe notes that there is no definitive evidence of chieftainship in early Neolithic villages, and Mellaart does not mention any evidence of it from Çatal Hüyük. There were apparently many priestesses (perhaps also priests), but there is no evidence of a hierarchical organization. While in Çatal Hüyük the surplus produced by new methods of agriculture must have been large enough to support the manufacture of luxuries and trade, the earlier and less-developed of the Neolithic villages produced, according to Childe, only a small surplus and hence had an even greater degree of economic equality than that of Çatal Hüyük. He points out that the Neolithic crafts must have been household industries and that craft traditions are not individual but collective. The experience and wisdom of all the community's members are constantly being pooled; the occupation is public, its rules are the result of communal experience. The pots from a given Neolithic village bear the stamp of a strong collective tradition, rather than of individuality. Besides there was as yet no shortage of land; when the population grew, young men could go off and start a village of their own. Under these economic circumstances the conditions were not given for the differentiation of society into different classes, or for the formation of a permanent leadership whose function it would be to organize the whole economy and who would exact their price for this skill. This could happen only later when many more discoveries and inventions had been made, when the surplus was much greater and could be transformed into "capital" and those owning it could make profits by making others work for them.

Two observations are of special importance from the point of view of aggression: there is no evidence of any sack or massacre during the eight hundred years of the existence of Çatal Hüyük so far explored in the

excavations. Furthermore, and even more impressive evidence for the absence of violence, among the many hundreds of skeletons unearthed, not a single one has been found that showed signs of violent death. (J. Mellaart, 1967.)

One of the most characteristic features of Neolithic villages, including Çatal Hüyük, is *the central role of the mother* in their social structure and their religion.

Following the older division of labor, where men hunted and women gathered roots and fruits, agriculture was most likely the discovery of women, while animal husbandry was that of men. (Considering the fundamental role of agriculture in the development of civilization, it is perhaps no exaggeration to state that modern civilization was founded by women.) The earth's and woman's capacity to give birth—a capacity that men lack—quite naturally gave the mother a supreme place in the world of the early agriculturalists. (Only when men could create material things by intellect, i.e., magically and technically—could they claim superiority.) The mother, as Goddess (often identified with mother earth), became the supreme goddess of the religious world, while the earthly mother became the center of family and social life.

The most impressive direct evidence for the central role of mothers in Çatal Hüyük lies in the fact that children were always buried with their mother, and never with their father. The skeletons were buried underneath the mother's divan (a kind of platform in the main room), which was larger than that of the father and always had the same location in the house. The burial of children exclusively with their mother is a characteristically matriarchal trait: the children's essential relationship is considered to be to the mother and not to the father, as in the case in patriarchal societies.

Although this burial system is an impressive datum in favor of the assumption of the matriarchal structure of Neolithic society, this thesis finds its full confirmation with the data we have on the religion of Çatal Hüyük and other excavated Neolithic villages in Anatolia.[24]

These excavations have revolutionized our concepts of early religious development. The most outstanding feature is the fact that this religion was centered around the figure of the mother-goddess. Mellaart concludes: "Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar have established a link … [whereby] a continuity in religion can be demonstrated from Çatal Hüyük to Hacilar and so on till

the great ‘Mother-Goddesses’ of archaic and classical times, the shadowy figures known as Cybele, Artemis and Aphrodite.” (J. Mellaart, 1967.)

The central role of mother-goddess can be clearly seen in the figures, wall paintings, and reliefs in the numerous shrines that have been excavated. In contrast to findings in other Neolithic sites, those of Çatal Hüyük do not entirely consist of mother-goddesses, but also show a male deity symbolized by a bull or, more frequently, by a bull’s head or horns. But this fact does not substantially alter the predominance of the “great mother” as the central deity. Among forty-one sculptures excavated, thirty-three were exclusively of goddesses. The eight sculptures in which a male god is symbolized are virtually all to be understood in reference to the goddess, partly as her sons and partly as her consorts. (On one of the older levels figurines of the goddess were found exclusively.) The central role of the mother-goddess is further demonstrated by the fact that she is shown alone, together with a male, pregnant, giving birth, but never subordinate to a male. There are some shrines in which the goddess is giving birth to a bull’s or a ram’s head. (Compare this with the typically patriarchal story of the female being given birth by the male: Eve and Athene.)

The mother-goddess is often found accompanied by a leopard, clothed with a leopard skin, or symbolically represented by leopards, at the time the most ferocious and deadly animal of that region. This would make her the mistress of wild animals, and it also indicates her double role as the goddess of life and of death, like so many other goddesses. “Mother earth,” who gives birth to her many and receives them again after their individual life cycle has ended is not necessarily a destroying mother. Yet she sometimes is (like the Hindu goddess Kali); to find the reasons why this development should have taken place requires a lengthy speculation which I must forgo.

The mother-goddess of the Neolithic religion is not only the mistress of wild animals. She is also the patroness of the hunt, the patroness of agriculture, and the mistress of plant life.

Mellaart makes these summarizing remarks on the role of women in the Neolithic society, including Çatal Hüyük:

> What is particularly noteworthy in the Neolithic religion of Anatolia, and this applies to Çatal Hüyük as much as to Hacilar, is the complete absence of sex in any of the figurines, statuettes, plastic reliefs or wall-paintings. The reproductive organs are never shown, representations of

> phallus and vulva are unknown, and this is the more remarkable as they were frequently portrayed both in the Upper Palaeolithic and in the Neolithic and Post-neolithic cultures outside Anatolia.[25] It seems that there is a very simple answer to this seemingly puzzling question, for emphasis on sex in art is invariably connected with male impulse and desire. If Neolithic woman was the creator of Neolithic religion, its absence is easily explained and a different symbolism was created in which breast, navel and pregnancy stand for the female principle, horns and horned animal heads for the male. In an early Neolithic society like that the Çatal Hüyük one might biologically expect a greater proportion of women than men and this is indeed reflected in the burials. Moreover, in the new economy a great number of tasks were undertaken by the women, a pattern that has not changed in Anatolian villages to this day, and this probably accounts for her social pre-eminence. As the only source of life she became associated with the processes of agriculture, with the taming and nourishing of domesticated animals, with the ideas of increase, abundance and fertility. Hence a religion which aimed at exactly the same conservation of life in all its forms, its propagation and the mysteries of its rites connected with life and death, birth and resurrection, were evidently part of her sphere rather than that of man. It seems extremely likely that the cult of the goddess was administered mainly by women, even if the presence of male priests is by no means excluded… (J. Mellaart, 1967.)[26]

The data that speak in favor of the view that Neolithic society was relatively egalitarian, without hierarchy, exploitation, or marked aggression, are suggestive. In fact, however, that these Neolithic villages in Anatolia had a matriarchal (matricentric) structure, adds a great deal more evidence to the hypothesis that Neolithic society, at least in Anatolia, was an essentially unaggressive and peaceful society. The reason for this lies in the spirit of affirmation of life and lack of destructiveness which J. J. Bachofen believed was an essential trait of all matriarchal societies.

Indeed, the findings brought to light by the excavation of Neolithic villages in Anatolia offer the most complete material evidence for the existence of matriarchal cultures and religions postulated by J. J. Bachofen in his work *Das Mutterrecht*, first published in 1861. By the analysis of

Greek and Roman myths, rituals, symbols, and dreams he had achieved something that only a genius could do: with his penetrating analytic power he reconstructed a phase of social organization and religion for which hardly any material evidence was available to him. (An American ethnologist, L. H. Morgan, [1870, 1877] arrived independently at very similar conclusions on the basis of his study of North American Indians.) Almost all anthropologists—with a few notable exceptions—declared Bachofen's findings to be without any scientific merit; in fact, it was not until 1967 that an English translation of a selection of Bachofen's writings was published. (J. J. Bachofen, 1967.)

There were probably two reasons for the rejection of Bachofen's theory: first, that it was almost impossible for anthropologists living in a patriarchal society to transcend their social and mental frames of reference and to imagine that male rule was not "natural." (Freud, for the same reason, arrived at his view of women as castrated men.) Second, the anthropologists were so accustomed to believing only in material evidence like skeletons, tools, weapons, etc., that they found it difficult to believe that myths or drama are not less real than artifacts; this whole attitude resulted also in a lack of appreciation for the potency and subtlety of penetrating, theoretical thinking.

The following paragraphs from Bachofen's *Mutterrecht* give an idea of this concept of the matriarchal spirit:

> The relationship which stands at the origin of all culture, of every virtue, of every nobler aspect of existence, is that between mother and child; it operates in a world of violence as the divine principle of love, of union, of peace. Raising her young, the woman learns earlier than the man to extend her loving care beyond the limits of the ego to another creature, and to direct whatever gift of invention she possesses to the preservation and improvement of the other's existence. Woman at this stage is the repository of all culture, of all benevolence, of all devotion, of all concern for the living and grief for the dead. Yet the love that arises from motherhood is not only more intense, but also more universal… Whereas the paternal principle is inherently restrictive, the maternal principle is universal; the paternal principle implies limitation to definite groups, but the maternal principle, like the life of nature, knows no barriers. The idea of motherhood produces

a sense of universal fraternity among all men, which dies with the development of paternity. The family based on father right is a closed individual organism, whereas the matriarchal family bears the typically universal character that stands at the beginning of all development and distinguishes material life from higher spiritual life. Every woman's womb, the mortal image of the earth mother Demeter, will give brothers and sisters to the children of ever, other woman; the homeland will know only brothers and sisters until the day when the development of the paternal system dissolves the undifferentiated unity of the mass and introduces a principle of articulation.

The matriarchal cultures present many expressions and even juridical formulations of this aspect of the maternal principle. It is the basis of the universal freedom and equality so frequent among matriarchal peoples, of their hospitality, and of their aversion to restriction of all sorts… And in it is rooted the admirable sense of kinship and fellow feeling which knows no barriers or dividing lines and embraces all members of a nation alike. Matriarchal states were particularly famed for their freedom from internecine strife and conflict … The matriarchal peoples—and this is no less characteristic—assigned special culpability to the physical injury of one's fellow men or even of animals… An air of tender humanity, discernible even in the facial expression of Egyptian statuary, permeates the culture of the matriarchal world." (J. J. Bachofen, 1967.)[27]

Prehistoric Societies and "Human Nature"

This picture of the mode of production and social organization of hunters and Neolithic agriculturalists is quite suggestive in regard to certain psychical traits that are generally supposed to be an intrinsic part of human nature. Prehistoric hunters and agriculturalists had no opportunity to develop a passionate striving for property or envy of the "haves," because there was no private property to hold on to and no important economic differences to cause envy. On the contrary, their way of life was conducive to the development of cooperation and peaceful living. There was no basis for the formation of the desire to exploit other human beings. The idea of exploiting another person's physical or psychical energy for one's own

purposes is absurd in a society where economically and socially there is no basis for exploitation.

The impulse to control others also had little chance to develop. The primitive band society and probably prehistoric hunters since about fifty thousand years ago were fundamentally different from civilized society precisely because human relations were not governed by the principles of control and power; their functioning depended on mutuality. An individual endowed with the passion for control would have been a social failure and without influence. Finally, there was little incentive for the development of greed, since production and consumption were stabilized at a certain level.[28]

Do the data on hunter-gatherers and early agriculturalists suggest that the passion of possessiveness, exploitation, greed, envy did not yet exist and are exclusively products of civilization? It does not seem to me that such a sweeping statement can be made. We do not have enough data to substantiate it, nor is it likely to be correct on theoretical grounds, since individual factors will engender these vices in some individuals even under the most favorable social circumstances. But there is a great difference between cultures which foster and encourage greed, envy, and exploitativeness by their social structure, and cultures which do the opposite. In the former, these vices will form part of the "social character"—i.e., of a syndrome to be found in the majority of people; in the latter, they will be individual aberrations from the norm which have little chance to influence the whole society. This hypothesis gains further strength if we now consider the next historical stage, urban development, which seems to have introduced not only new kinds of civilization but also those passions which are generally attributed to man's natural endowment.

The Urban Revolution[29]

A new kind of society developed in the fourth and third millennia, B.C. which can best be characterized in Mumford's brilliant formulation:

> Out of the early neolithic complex a different kind of social organization arose: no longer dispersed in small units, but unified in a large one: no longer "democratic," that is, based on neighborly intimacy, customary usage, and consent, but authoritarian, centrally

> directed, under the control of a dominant minority: no longer confined to a limited territory, but deliberately "going out of bounds" to seize raw materials and enslave helpless men, to exercise control, to exact tribute. This new culture was dedicated, not just to the enhancement of life, but to the expansion of collective power. By perfecting new instruments of coercion, the rulers of this society had, by the Third Millennium, B.C., organized industrial and military power on a scale that was never to be surpassed until our own time. (L. Mumford, 1967.)

How had it happened?

Within a short period, historically speaking, man learned to harness the physical energy of oxen and the energy of the winds. He invented the plough, the wheeled cart, the sailing boat, and he discovered the chemical processes involved in the smelting of copper ores (to some extent known earlier), and the physical properties of metals, and he began to work out a solar calendar. As a consequence, the way was prepared for the art of writing and standards and measures. "In no period of history till the days of Galileo," writes Childe, "was progress in knowledge so rapid or far-reaching discoveries so frequent." (V. G. Childe, 1936.)

But social change was not less revolutionary. The small villages of self-sufficient farmers were transformed into populous cities nourished by secondary industries and foreign trade, and these new cities were organized as city states. Man literally created new land. The great cities of Babylonia rose on a sort of platform of reeds, laid crisscross upon the alluvial mud. They dug channels to water the fields and drain the marshes, they built dykes and mounds to protect men and cattle from the waters and raise them above the flood. This creation of tillable land required a great deal of labor and this "capital in the form of human labor was being sunk in the land." (V. G. Childe, 1936.)

Another result of this process was that a specialized labor force had to be used for this kind of work, and for cultivating the land necessary to grow food for those others who were specialized in crafts, public works, and trade. They had to be organized by the community and directed by an elite which did the planning, protecting, and controlling. This means that a much greater accumulation of surplus was needed than in the earlier Neolithic villages, and that this surplus was not just used as food reserve for times of

need or growing population, but as capital to be used for an expanding production. Childe has pointed to another factor inherent in these conditions of life in the river valleys—the exceptional power of the society to coerce its members. The community could refuse a recalcitrant member access to water by closing the channels leading it to his field. This possibility of coercion was one of the foundations upon which the power of kings, priests, and the dominant elite rested once they had succeeded in replacing or, ideologically speaking, "representing"—the social will.

With the new forms of production, one of the most decisive changes in the history of man took place. His product was no longer limited to what he could produce by his own work, as had been the case in hunting societies and early agriculture. It is true that with the beginning of Neolithic agriculture man had already been able to produce a small surplus, but this surplus only helped to stabilize his life. When, however, it grew, it could be used for an entirely new purpose; it became possible to feed people who did not directly produce food, but cleared the marshes, built houses and cities and pyramids, or served as soldiers. Of course, such use could only take place when technique and division of labor had reached a degree which made it possible for human labor to be so employed. At this point surplus grew immensely. The more fields were ploughed, the more marshes were drained, the more surplus could be produced. This new possibility led to one of the most fundamental changes in human history. *It was discovered that man could be used as an economic instrument, that he could be exploited, that he could be made a slave.*

Let us follow this process in more detail in its economic, social, religious, and psychological consequences. The basic economic facts of the new society were, as indicated above, greater specialization of work, the transformation of surplus into capital, and the need for a centralized mode of production. The first consequence of this was the rise of different classes. The privileged classes did the directing and organizing, claiming and obtaining for themselves a disproportionately large part of the product, that is to say, a standard of living which the majority of the population could not obtain. Below them were the lower classes, peasants and artisans. Below those were the slaves, prisoners taken as a result of wars. The privileged classes organized their own hierarchy headed originally by permanent chiefs—eventually by kings, as representatives of the gods—who were the nominal heads of the whole system.

Another consequence of the new mode of production is assumed to have been *conquest* as an essential requisite to the accumulation of communal capital needed for the accomplishment of the urban revolution. But there was a still more basic reason for the invention of war as an institution: the contradiction between an economic system that needed unification in order to be optimally effective, and political and dynastic separation that conflicted with this economic need. War as an institution was a new invention, like kingdom or bureaucracy, made around 3000 B.C. Then as now, it was not caused by psychological factors, such as human aggression, but, aside from the wishes for power and glory of the kings and their bureaucracy, was the result of objective conditions that made war useful and which, as a consequence, tended to generate and increase human destructiveness and cruelty.[30]

These social and political changes were accompanied by a profound change in the role of women in society and of the mother figure in religion. No longer was the fertility of the soil the source of all life and creativity, but the intellect which produced new inventions, techniques, abstract thinking, and the state with its laws. No longer the womb, but the mind became the creative power, and simultaneously, not women, but men dominated society.

This change is poetically expressed in the Babylonian hymn of creation, Enuma Elish. This myth tells us of a victorious rebellion of the male gods against Tiamat, the "Great Mother" who ruled the universe. They form an alliance against her and choose Marduk to be their leader. After a bitter war Tiamat is slain, from her body heaven and earth are formed, and Marduk rules as supreme God.

However, before he is chosen to be the leader, Marduk has to pass a test, which may seem insignificant—or puzzling—to modern man, but it is the key to the understanding of the myth:

> *Then they placed a garment in their midst;*
> *To Marduk, their first-born, they said:*
> *"Verily, O lord, thy destiny is supreme among the gods,*
> *Command 'to destroy and to create,' (and) it shall be!*
>
> *By the word of thy mouth let the garment be destroyed;*
> *Command again, and let the garment be whole!"*
> *He commanded with his mouth, and the garment was destroyed.*

Again he commanded, and the garment was restored.
When the gods, his fathers, beheld the efficiency of his word
They rejoiced (and) did homage, (saying)
"Marduk is king!"

—A. Heidel, 1942

The meaning of this test is to show that man has overcome his inability for natural creation—a quality which only the soil and the female had—by a new form of creation, that by the word (thought). Marduk, who can create in this way, has overcome the natural superiority of the mother and hence can replace her. The biblical story begins where the Babylonian myth ends: the male god creates the world by the *word*. (E. Fromm, 1951a.)

One of the most significant features of the new urban society was that it was based on the principle of patriarchal rule, in which the principle of control is inherent: control of nature, control of slaves, women and children. The new patriarchal man literally "makes" the earth. His technique is not simply modification of the natural processes, but their domination and control by man, resulting in new products which are not found in nature. Men themselves came under the control of those who organized the work of the community, and hence the leaders had to have power over those they controlled.

In order to achieve the aims of this new society, everything, nature *and* man, had to be controlled and had to either exercise—or fear—power. In order to become controllable, men had to learn to obey and to submit, and in order to submit they had to believe in the superior power—physical and/or magic—of their rulers. While in the Neolithic village, as well as among primitive hunters, leaders guided and counseled the people and did not exploit them, and while their leadership was accepted voluntarily or, to use another term, while prehistoric authority was "rational" authority resting on competence, the authority of the new patriarchal system was one based on force and power; it was exploitative and mediated by the psychical mechanism of fear, "awe," and submission. It was "irrational authority."

Lewis Mumford has expressed the new principle governing the life of the city very succinctly: "To exert power in every form was the essence of civilization; the city found a score of ways of expressing struggle, aggression, domination, conquest—and servitude." He points out that the new ways of the cities were "rigorous, efficient, often harsh, even sadistic,"

and that the Egyptian monarchs and their Mesopotamian counterparts "boasted on their monuments and tablets of their personal feats in mutilating, torturing, and killing with their own hands their chief captives." (L. Mumford, 1961.)

As a result of my clinical experience in psychoanalytic therapy I had long come to the conviction (E. Fromm, 1941a) that the essence of sadism is the passion for unlimited, godlike control over men and things.[31] Mumford's view of the sadistic character of these societies is an important confirmation of my own.[32]

In addition to sadism, the passion to destroy life and the attraction to all that is dead (necrophilia) seem to develop in the new urban civilization. Mumford also speaks of the destructive, death-oriented myth to be found in the new social order, and quotes Patrick Geddes as saying that each historic civilization begins with a living, urban core, the polls, and ends in a common graveyard of dust and bones, a Necropolis, or city of the dead: fire-scorched ruins, shattered buildings, empty workshops, heaps of meaningless refuse, the population massacred or driven into slavery. (L Mumford, 1961.)

Whether we read the story of the Hebrews' conquest of Canaan or the story of the Babylonians' wars, the same spirit of unlimited and inhuman destructiveness is shown. A good example is Sennacherib's stone inscription on the total annihilation of Babylon:

> The city and (its) houses from its foundation to its top, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. The wall and the outer wall, temples and gods, temple towers of brick and earth, as many as they were, I razed and dumped them into the Arakhtu Canal. Through the midst of that city I dug canals, I flooded its site with water, and the very foundation thereof I destroyed. I made its destruction more complete than that by a flood. (Quoted by L. Mumford, 1961.)

The history of civilization, from the destruction of Carthage and Jerusalem to the destruction of Dresden, Hiroshima, and the people, soil, and trees of Vietnam, is a tragic record of sadism and destructiveness.

Aggressiveness in Primitive Cultures

Thus far we have dealt only with the aggression to be found among prehistorical societies and among still existing primitive hunter-gatherers. What can we learn from other, more advanced yet still primitive cultures?

It should be easy to examine this question by consulting a work dealing with aggression on the basis of the vast amount of anthropological data collected. But it is surprising—and a somewhat shocking fact—that no such work exists; evidently the phenomenon of aggression has not, so far, been considered of sufficient importance by anthropologists to lead them to summarize and interpret their data from this point of view. There is only the brief paper by Derek Freeman, in which he attempts to give a summary of the anthropological data on aggression in order to support the Freudian thesis. (D. Freeman, 1964.) Equally short is a summarizing paper by another anthropologist, H. Helmuth (1967). Helmuth presents anthropological data and emphasizes the opposite point of view, the relative absence of aggression among primitive societies.

In the following pages I shall offer a number of other studies on aggression in primitive societies, beginning with the analysis of data I undertook from the most accessible anthropological publications. Since the studies in these publications were not made with a selective bias for the viewpoint for or against aggression, respectively, they can be considered a kind of “random” sample in a very loose sense of the word. Nevertheless, I do not imply that the results of this analysis are in any way statistically valid in terms of the distribution of aggressiveness among primitive cultures in general. My main purpose is clearly not a statistical one, but to demonstrate that nonaggressive societies are not as rare or “puny” as Freeman and other exponents of the Freudian theory indicate. I also wanted to show that aggressiveness is not just *one trait*, but part of a *syndrome;* that we find aggression regularly together with other traits in the system, such as strict hierarchy, dominance, class division, etc. In other words, aggression is to be understood as part of the *social character,* not as an isolated behavior trait.[33]

Analysis of Thirty Primitive Tribes

I analyzed thirty primitive cultures from the standpoint of aggressiveness versus peacefulness. Three of them were described by Ruth Benedict (1934);[34] thirteen by Margaret Mead (1961);[35] fifteen, by G. P.

Murdock (1934),[36] and one, by C. M. Turnbull (1965).[37] The analysis of these thirty societies permits us to distinguish three different and clearly delineated systems (A, B, C). These societies are not simply differentiated in terms of "more or less" aggression, or "more or less" nonaggression, but in terms of different character systems distinguished from each other by a number of traits that form the system, some of which do not have any obvious connection with aggression.[38]

System A: Life-Affirmative Societies

In this system the main emphasis of ideals, customs and institutions is that they serve the preservation and growth of life in all its forms. There is a minimum of hostility, violence, or cruelty among people, no harsh punishment, hardly any crime, and the institution of war is absent or plays an exceedingly small role. Children are treated with kindness, there is no severe corporal punishment; women are in general considered equal to men, or at least not exploited or humiliated; there is a generally permissive and affirmative attitude toward sex. There is little envy, covetousness, greed, and exploitativeness. There is also little competition and individualism and a great deal of cooperation; personal property is only in things that are used. There is a general attitude of trust and confidence, not only in others but particularly in nature; a general prevalence of good humor, and a relative absence of depressive moods.

Among the societies falling under this life-affirmative category. I have placed the Zuñi Pueblo Indians, the Mountain Arapesh and the Bathonga, the Aranda, the Semangs, the Todas, the Polar Eskimos, and the Mbutus.

One finds in the system A group both hunters (for instance, the Mbutus) and agriculturists-sheepowners (like the Zuñis). In it are societies with relatively abundant food supply and others characterized by a good deal of scarcity. This statement by no means implies, however, that the characterological differences are not dependent on and largely influenced by the differences of the socioeconomic structure of these respective societies. It only indicates that the obvious economic factors, such as poverty or wealth, hunting or agriculture, etc., are not the only critical factors for the development of character. In order to understand the connection between economy and social character one would have to study the total socioeconomic structure of each society.

System B: Nondestructive-Aggressive Societies

This system shares with the first the basic element of not being destructive, but differs in that aggressiveness and war, although not central, are normal occurrences, and in that competition, hierarchy, and individualism are present. These societies are by no means permeated by destructiveness or cruelty or by exaggerated suspiciousness, but they do not have the kind of gentleness and trust which is characteristic of the system A societies. System B could perhaps be best characterized by stating that it is imbued with a spirit of male aggressiveness, individualism, the desire to get things and to accomplish tasks. In my analysis the following fourteen tribes fall under this category: the Greenland Eskimos, the Bachigas, the Ojibwas, the Ifugaos, the Manus, the Samoans, the Dakotas, the Maoris, the Tasmanians, the Kazaks, the Ainus, the Crows, the Incas, and the Hottentots.

System C: Destructive Societies

The structure of the system C societies is very distinct. It is characterized by much interpersonal violence, destructiveness, aggression, and cruelty, both within the tribe and against others, a pleasure in war, maliciousness, and treachery. The whole atmosphere of life is one of hostility, tension, and fear. Usually there is a great deal of competition, great emphasis on private property (if not in material things then in symbols), strict hierarchies, and a considerable amount of war-making. Examples for this system are: the Dobus, and the Kwakiutl; the Haidas, the Aztecs, the Witotos, and the Ganda.

I do not claim that my classification of each society tinder these categories is not open to controversy. But whether one agrees or disagrees with the classification of a few societies does not make too much difference, because my main point is not statistical, but qualitative. The main contrast lies between systems A and B on the one hand, which are both life affirming, and system C, which is basically cruel or destructive, i.e., sadistic or necrophilous.

Examples of the Three Systems

In order to help the reader to get a better picture of the nature of the three systems, I shall give in the following a more detailed example of a characteristic society for each system.

The Zuñi Indians (System A)

The Zuñi Indians have been thoroughly studied by Ruth Benedict. (1934) as well as by Margaret Mead, Irving Goldman, Ruth Bunzel, and others. They live by agriculture and sheep herding in the Southwestern United States. Like other Pueblo Indian societies they inhabited numerous cities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but their history can be followed much further back to its simple beginnings in one-room stone houses, to each of which was attached an underground ceremonial chamber. Economically, they can be said to live in a state of abundance, although their appreciation for material goods is not very high. In their social attitude there is little competition even though there is a limitation of irrigable land. They are organized along matricentric lines, although priests and civil officials are men. Individuals who are aggressive, competitive, and non-cooperative are regarded as aberrant types. Work is done essentially in cooperation, with the exception of sheep raising which is exclusively a man's occupation. In economic activities rivalry is excluded, again with the exception of sheep raising, where one finds some squabbles, but no deep rivalries. On the whole, little attention is paid to individual achievement. Inasmuch as there is some quarreling, it is mainly caused by sexual jealousy and not in relation to economic activities or possessions.

Hoarding is practically unknown; while there are richer and poorer individuals, wealth remains highly fluid, and it is characteristic of the Zuñi attitude toward material goods that a man would lend his jewelry willingly, not only to friends but to any member of the society who asks for it. In spite of a certain amount of sexual jealousy, marriages on the whole are lasting, although there is easy divorce. Women are, as one would expect in a matricentric society, in no way subordinate to men. There is a great deal of gift giving, but in contrast to a number of competitive societies, this does not have the function of emphasizing one's own wealth or of humiliating the one to whom the gift is given, and no attempt is made to maintain reciprocity. Wealth does not remain long in one family, as it is acquired by individual work and industriousness, and exploitation of others is unknown.

While there is private ownership of land, litigations are rare and quickly settled.

The Zuñi system can only be understood by the fact that material things are relatively little valued and the fact that the major interest in life is religious. To put it in another way, the dominant value is life and living itself, not things and their possessions. Songs, prayers, rituals, and dances are the major and most important elements in this system. They are directed by priests who are highly respected, although they do not exercise any censures or jurisdiction. The value of religious life as against ownership and economic success is seen in that officials who have the function of judges in cases of material litigation are not held in great respect, quite in contrast to the priests.

Personal authority is perhaps the most rigorously disparaged trait among the Zuñi. The definition of a good man is one who has “a pleasing address, a yielding disposition and a generous heart.” Men never act violently and do not contemplate violence even when the wife is unfaithful. During the initiation period boys are whipped and frightened by *kachinas,* but in contrast to many other cultures even this initiation is never in any way an ordeal. Murder hardly exists; as Benedict reports from her own observation, there is no memory of homicide. Suicide is outlawed. Themes of terror and danger are not cultivated in their myths or tales. There is no sense of sin, especially in connection with sex, and sexual chastity is generally regarded with disfavor. Sex is considered to be an incident in a happy life, but by no means, as in some other rather aggressive societies, the only source of pleasure. There seems to be some fear connected with sex, but insofar as there is fear, men are afraid of women and of sexual intercourse with them. Goldman mentions the prevalence of the theme of castration fear in a matriarchal society. This indicates man’s fear of women rather than, as in Freud’s concept, the fear of a punishing father.

Is this picture of a system characterized by unaggressiveness, nonviolence, cooperation, and enjoyment of life changed by the fact that one finds also jealousies and quarrels? No society could be characterized as nonviolent and peaceful if it has to live up to an absolute ideal of complete absence of hostility or of any quarrels. But such a point of view is rather naive. Even basically unaggressive and nonviolent people will occasionally react with annoyance under certain conditions, especially those with a choleric temperament. This does not mean, however, that their *character*

structure is aggressive, violent, or destructive. One might even go further and say that in a culture where expressions of anger are as much tabooed as they are in the Zuñi culture, sometimes a relatively mild quantity of anger will pile up and be expressed in a quarrel; but only if one is dogmatically attached to the view of man's innate aggression will one interpret these occasional quarrels as indicating the depth and intensity of the repressed aggression.

Such an interpretation is based on a misuse of the Freudian discovery of unconscious motivation. The logic of this reasoning is: if a suspected trait is manifest, its existence is obvious and undeniable; but if it is completely absent, this very absence proves its presence; it must be repressed, and the less it shows manifestly, the more intense it must be in order to require such thorough repression, With this method one can prove anything, and Freud's discovery is transformed into a means for empty dogmatism. Every psychoanalyst agrees, in principle, that the assumption that a certain drive is repressed requires that we have empirical evidence for the repression in dreams, phantasies, unintended behavior, and so on. However, this theoretical principle is often neglected in the analysis of persons and of cultures. One is so convinced of the validity of the premise required by the theory that a certain drive exists, that one does not bother to discover its empirical manifestation. The analyst who proceeds this way-acts in good faith because he is unaware of the fact that he expects to find what the theory claims—and nothing else. In the weighing of the anthropological evidence, care must be taken to avoid this error, without losing sight of the principle of psychoanalytic dialectics that a trend can exist without being consciously perceived.

In the case of the Zuñi there is no evidence that the absence of manifest hostility is due to an intense repression of aggression and hence there is no valid reason to question the picture of an unaggressive, life-loving, cooperative system.

Another method of ignoring the data offered by a nonaggressive society is either to ignore them altogether or to maintain that they are of no importance. Thus Freud, for instance in the famous letter to Einstein, dealt with the problem of peaceful primitive societies in the following way: "We are told that in certain happy regions of the earth, where nature provides in abundance everything that man requires, there are races whose life is passed in tranquility, and who know neither coercion nor aggression. I can scarcely

believe it and I should be glad to hear more of these fortunate beings." (S. Freud, 1933.) I do not know what Freud's attitude would have been if he had known more about these "fortunate beings." It seems he never made a serious attempt to inform himself about them.

The Manus (System B)

The Manus (M. Mead, 1961) are an illustration for a system which is clearly distinguished from system A because the main aim of life is not living and enjoyment, art and ritual, but the attainment of personal success through economic activities. On the other hand, the system of the Manus is very different from system C, of which the Dobus will be shown as an example. The Manus are not essentially violent, destructive or sadistic, nor are they malicious or treacherous.

The Manus are sea-dwelling, fishing people living in villages built on piles in the lagoons along the south coast of the Great Admiralty Island. They trade their surplus catch with nearby agricultural land dwellers and obtain from them manufactured articles from more distant sections of the Archipelago. All their energy is completely dedicated to material success, and they drive themselves so hard that many men die in their early middle age; in fact it is rare for a man to live to see his first grandchild. This obsession for relentless work is upheld not only because of the fact that success is the main value, but because of the shame related to failure. Not to be able to pay back one's debts is a matter which leads to humiliation of the afflicted individual; not to have any economic success which promotes a certain amount of capital accumulation puts one in the category of a man without any social prestige. But whatever social prestige a man has won by hard work is lost when he is no longer economically active.

The main emphasis in the training of the young is laid upon the respect for property, shame, and physical efficiency. Individualism is enhanced by the fact that relatives compete with each other for the child's allegiance, and the child learns to consider itself valuable. Their marriage code is a strict one, resembling nineteenth-century middle-class morality. The main vices are sex offenses, scandal-mongering, obscenity, failure to pay debts, failure to help relatives, and failure to keep one's house in repair. The training for hard work and competition seems to be contradicted by one phase in the life of the young men before their marriage. The young unmarried men form a

kind of community, living in a common clubhouse, sharing a common mistress (usually a war prisoner) and their tobacco and betel nut. They live a rather merry, roistering life on the borders of society. Perhaps this interval is necessary to produce a modicum of pleasure and contentment during one period of a male's life. But this idyllic life is interrupted for good by the act of marriage. In order to marry, the young man has to borrow money, and for the first few years of his marriage there is only one goal for him, to repay the debt incurred to his financial backer. He must not even enjoy his wife too much as long as he owes part of her to his sponsor. When this first obligation is met, those who want to avoid failure devote their life to amassing property themselves, which makes them backers of other marriages; this is one condition of their becoming leaders in the community. Marriage itself is largely an economic affair in which personal affection and sexual interests play a small role. The relationship between man and wife remains, as is not surprising under these circumstances, antagonistic, at least for approximately the first fifteen years of marriage. Only when they begin to arrange marriages for their children and their dependants does the relationship of couples assume a certain character of cooperation. Energy is so completely devoted to the overriding aim of success that personal motives of affection, loyalty, preference, dislike, and hatred are all barred. It is of crucial importance for the understanding of this system that while there is little love and affection, there is also little destructiveness or cruelty. Even within the fierce competition which dominates the whole picture, the interest is not to humiliate others but only to maintain one's own position. Cruelty is relatively absent. In fact, those who do not succeed at all, who are failures, are left alone, not made the butt of aggression. War is not excluded, but in general it is disapproved of except as a way of keeping young men out of mischief. While war served sometimes for the capture of women for use as prostitutes, on the whole it was considered disruptive of trade and was not a way for success. Their ideal personality was not at all that of a hero but of a highly competitive, successful, industrious and nonpassionate man.

Their religious ideas clearly reflect this system. Their religion is not based on the attempt to attain ecstasy or oneness with nature but has purely practical purposes: placating ghosts with slight formal offerings; instituting methods for discovering causes of illness and misfortune and remedying these causes.

The center of life in this system is property and success, the main obsession is work, and the greatest fear is failure. It is almost necessary that in such a system, a great deal of anxiety is engendered. But it is important that in spite of this anxiety, no major degree of destructiveness and hostility is part of their social character.

There are a number of other societies in the system B group which are less competitive and possessive than the Manus, but I preferred to choose the Manus because this example permits one to delineate more clearly the difference between an individualistic-aggressive character structure and the cruel and sadistic character structure in system C.

The Dobu (System C)

The inhabitants of the Dobu Islands (R. Benedict, 1934) are a good example for system C. While in close vicinity of the Trobriand Islanders, so well known by the publications of Malinowski, their environment and character are entirely different. While the Trobriands live on fertile islands that provide easy and plentiful living, the Dobuan islands, on the other hand, are of volcanic nature with small pockets of soil and poor fishing opportunities.

The Dobuans are not known among their neighbors for their poverty, however, but for their dangerousness. While they have no chiefs, they are a well-organized group arranged in concentric circles, within each of which specified traditional forms of hostility are allowed. Aside from a matrilineal grouping, the *susu* (“mother’s milk”), where one finds a certain amount of cooperation and trust, the Dobuans’ interpersonal relations have the principle of distrusting everybody as a possible enemy. Even marriage does not lessen the hostility between the two families. A certain degree of peace is established by the fact that the couple live during alternate years in the village of the husband and in the village of the wife. The relationship between husband and wife is full of suspiciousness and hostility. Faithfulness is not expected, and no Dobuan will admit that a man and woman are ever together even for the shortest period except for sexual purposes.

Two features are the main characteristics of this system; the importance of private ownership and of malignant sorcery. The exclusiveness of ownership among them is characterized by its fierceness

and ruthlessness, for which Benedict gives many examples. Ownership of a garden and its privacy is respected to such a degree that by custom, man and wife have intercourse within it. Nobody must know the amount of property anyone has. It is as secret as if it had been stolen. The same sense of ownership exists with regard to ownership of incantations and charms. The Dobus have “disease charms” which produce and cure illnesses and each illness has a special charm. Illness is explained exclusively as a result of malevolent use of a charm. Some individuals own a charm which completely controls the production and cure of a certain illness. This disease-and-cure monopoly for one illness naturally gives them considerable power. Their whole life is governed by magic since no result in any field is possible without it, and magical formulae quite aside from those connected with illness are among the most important items of private property.

All existence is cutthroat competition and every advantage is gained at the expense of the defeated rival. But competition is not as in other systems, open and frank, but secret and treacherous. The ideal of a good and successful man is one who has cheated another of his place.

The most admired virtue and the greatest achievement is *“wabuwabu”* a system of sharp practices which stresses one’s own gains at the expense of another’s loss. The art is to reap personal advantage in a situation in which others are victims. (This is a system quite different from that of the market which, in principle at least, is based on a fair exchange by which both sides are supposed to profit.) Even more characteristic of the spirit in this system is their treachery. In ordinary relations the Dobuan is suave and unctuously polite. As one man puts it: “If we wish to kill a man we approach him, we eat, drink, sleep, work and rest with him, it may be for several moons. We bide our time. We call him friend.” (R. Benedict, 1934.) As a result, in the not infrequent case of murder, suspicion falls on those who have tried to be friends with the victim.

Aside from material possession, the most passionate desires are in the field of sex. The problem of sex is complicated, if we think of their general joylessness. Their conventions exclude laughter, and make dourness a virtue. As one of them says, “In the gardens we do not play, we do not sing, we do not yodel, we do not relate legends.” (R. Benedict, 1934.) In fact, Benedict reports of one man crouching on the outskirts of a village of another tribe where the people were dancing, and he indignantly repudiated

the suggestion that he might join: “My wife would say I had been happy.” (R. Benedict, 1934.) Happiness for them is a paramount taboo. Nevertheless, this dourness and taboo on happiness or pleasurable activities goes together with promiscuity and with a high estimation of sexual passion and sexual techniques. In fact the basic sexual teaching by which girls are prepared for marriage is that the way to hold their husband is to keep him sexually exhausted.

It seems, in contrast to the Zuñi, sexual satisfaction is almost the only pleasureful and exhilarating experience the Dobuans permit themselves. Nevertheless, as we would expect, their sexual life is colored by their character structure, and it would seem that their sexual satisfaction carries with it only a modicum of joy and in no way is a basis for warm and friendly relations between man and woman. Paradoxically, they are very prudish and in this respect, as Benedict mentions, as extreme as the Puritans. It seems that, precisely because happiness and enjoyment are tabooed, sex must assume the quality of something bad though very desirable. Indeed, sexual passion can serve as a compensation for joylessness just as much as it can be an expression of joy. With the Dobuans it clearly seems to be the former.[39]

Summarizing, Benedict states:

> Life in Dobu fosters extreme forms of animosity and malignancy which most societies have minimized by their institutions. Dobuan institutions, on the other hand, exalt them to the highest degree. The Dobuan lives out without repression man’s worst nightmares of the ill-will of the universe, and according to his view of life virtue consists in selecting a victim upon whom he can vent the malignancy he attributes alike to human society and to the powers of nature. All existence appears to him as a cut-throat struggle in which deadly antagonists are pitted against one another in a contest for each one of the goods of life. Suspicion and cruelty are his trusted weapons in the strife and he gives no mercy, as he asks none. (R. Benedict, 1934.)

The Evidence for Destructiveness and Cruelty

The anthropological data have demonstrated that the instinctivistic interpretation of human destructiveness is not tenable.[40] While we find in

all cultures that men defend themselves against vital threats by fighting (or by fleeing), destructiveness and cruelty are minimal in so many societies that these great differences could not be explained if we were dealing with an "innate" passion. Furthermore, the fact that the least-civilized societies like the hunter-gatherers and early agriculturalists show less destructiveness than the more-developed ones speaks against the idea that destructiveness is part of human "nature." Finally, the fact that destructiveness is not an isolated factor, but as we have seen, part of a syndrome, speaks against the instinctivistic thesis.

But the fact that destructiveness and cruelty are not part of human nature does not imply that they are not widespread and intense. This fact does not have to be proven. It has been shown by many students of primitive society,[41] although it is important to keep in mind that these data refer to more developed—or deteriorated—primitive societies and not to the most primitive ones, the hunter-gatherers. Unfortunately, we ourselves have been and still are witnesses of such extraordinary acts of destruction and cruelty that we need not even look at the historical record.

In view of this I shall not cite the ample material on human destructiveness which is familiar, while the newer findings about hunter-gatherers and early Neolithic agriculturalists needed to be quoted extensively because they are relatively little known except among specialists.

I want to caution the reader in two respects. First, much confusion arises because of the use of the word "primitive" for pre-civilized cultures of very different kinds. What they have in common is the lack of a written language, of an elaborate technique, of the use of money, but with regard to their economic, social, and political structure primitive societies differ radically from each other. In fact there is no such thing as "primitive societies"—except as an abstraction—but only various types of primitive societies. Lack of destructiveness is characteristic for hunter-gatherers and is to be found in some more highly developed primitive societies, while in many others and in civilized societies destructiveness dominates the picture, and not peacefulness.

Another error against which I want to caution is to ignore the spiritual and religious meaning and motivation of actually destructive and cruel acts. Let us consider one drastic example, the sacrifice of children, as it was practiced in Canaan at the time of the Hebrew conquest and in Carthage

down to its destruction by the Romans, in the third century B.C. Were these parents motivated by the destructive and cruel passion to kill their own children? Surely this is very unlikely. The story of Abraham's attempt to sacrifice Isaac, a story meant to speak against sacrifice of children, movingly emphasizes Abraham's love for Isaac; nevertheless Abraham does not waver in his decision to kill his son. Quite obviously we deal here with a religious motivation which is stronger than even the love for the child. The man in such a culture is completely devoted to his religious system, and he is not cruel, even though he appears so to a person outside this system.

It may help to see this point if we think of a modern phenomenon which can be compared with child sacrifice, that of war. Take the First World War. A mixture of economic interests, ambition, and vanity on the part of the leaders, and a good deal of stupid blundering on all sides brought about the war. But once it had broken out (or even a little bit earlier), it became a "religious" phenomenon. The state, the nation, national honor, became the idols, and both sides voluntarily sacrificed their children to these idols. A large percentage of the young men of the British and of the German upper classes which are responsible for the war were wiped out in the early days of the fighting. Surely they were loved by their parents. Yet, especially for those who were most deeply imbued with the traditional concepts, their love did not make them hesitate in sending their children to death, nor did the young ones who were going to die have any hesitation. The fact that, in the case of child sacrifice, the father kills the child directly while, in the case of war, both sides have an arrangement to kill each other's children makes little difference. In the case of war, those who are responsible for it know what is going to happen, yet the power of the idols is greater than the power of love for their children. One phenomenon that has often been quoted as a proof of man's innate destructiveness is that of cannibalism. Much has been made by the defenders of the thesis of man's innate destructiveness of findings which seem to indicate that even the most primitive form of man, Peking Man (around 500,000 B.C.), was a cannibal.

What are the facts?

The fragments of forty skulls were found in Choukoutien, assumed to have belonged to the most primitive *Homo* known, Peking Man. Hardly any other bones were found. The skulls were mutilated at the base, which suggests that the brain had been extracted. The further conclusion was made

that the brain was eaten and hence that the Choukoutien findings prove that the earliest man known of was a cannibal.

However, none of these conclusions have been proved. We do not even know who killed the men whose skulls were found, for what purpose, and whether this was the exception or a typical case. Mumford (1967) has stressed the point convincingly, as has also K. J. Narr (1961), that these conjectures are nothing but speculations. Whatever the facts about Peking man are, the widespread later cannibalism, as L. Mumford states, especially in Africa and New Guinea, cannot be taken as proof for cannibalism among man at a lower stage. (This is the same problem we have found in the phenomenon that the most primitive men are less destructive than the more developed and, incidentally, also have a more advanced form of religion than many more developed primitives. [K. J. Narr, 1961]).

Among the many speculations about the meaning of the possible extraction of the brain in Peking Man, one deserves special attention, i.e., the assumption that we deal here with a ritualistic act in which the brain was not eaten for nourishment but as sacred food. A. C. Blanc in his study of ideologies in early man has pointed out, like the previously mentioned authors, that we know almost nothing of the religious ideas of Peking Man, but that it is possible to think of him as the first one to practice ritualistic cannibalism. (A. C. Blanc, 1961.)[42] Blanc suggests a possible connection between the findings in Choukoutien and findings in Monte Circeo of Neanderthal skulls that showed a mutilation of the base of the skull in order to extract the brain. He believes that there is enough evidence available now to permit the conclusion that we deal here with a ritualistic act. Blanc points out that these mutilations are identical with those produced by headhunters in Borneo and Melanesia, where headhunting clearly has a ritualistic meaning. It is interesting that these tribes, as Blanc states, are “not particularly bloodthirsty or aggressive and have rather high morals.” (A. C. Blanc, 1961.)

All these data lead to the conclusion that our knowledge of Peking Man’s cannibalism is nothing more than a plausible construction, and if true, we deal most likely with a ritualistic phenomenon, entirely different from most of the destructive and nonritualistic cannibalism in Africa, South America, and New Guinea. (M. R. Davie, 1929.) The rarity of *prehistorical* cannibalism is clearly indicated by the fact that E. Vollhard, in his monograph “*Kannibalismus,*” had stated that no valid evidence for the

existence of early cannibalism had yet been observed and that he changed his mind only in 1942 when Blanc showed him the evidence of the Monte Circeo skull. (Reported by A. C. Blanc, 1961.)

In headhunting we also find ritualistic motives, like those in ritualistic cannibalism. To what extent headhunting changes from a religiously meaningful ritual to behavior generated by sadism and destructiveness deserves much more examination than has been devoted to this problem so far. Torture is perhaps much more rarely a ritualistic performance than an expression of sadistic impulses, whether it occurs in a primitive tribe or in a lynch mob today.

All these phenomena of destructiveness and cruelty require for their understanding an appreciation of the religious motivation that may be present rather than a destructive or cruel one. But this distinction finds little understanding in a culture in which there is little awareness of the intensity of strivings for nonpractical, nonmaterial goals, and of the power of spiritual and moral motivation.

However, even if a better understanding of many instances of destructive and cruel *behavior* will reduce the incidence of destructiveness and cruelty as psychical *motivations*, the fact remains that enough instances remain to suggest that man, in contrast to virtually all mammals, is the only primate who can feel intense pleasure in killing and torturing. I believe I have demonstrated in this chapter that this destructiveness is neither innate, nor part of "human nature," and that it is not common to all men. The question of what other and specifically human conditions are responsible for this potential viciousness of man will be discussed and I hope—at least to some extent—answered in the following chapters.

[1]Washburn and Lancaster (1968) contains rich material on all aspects of hunting life. Cf. also S. L. Washburn and V. Avis (1958).

[2]The mass slaughter of the French Communards, 1871, by the victorious army of Thiers is a drastic example.

[3]Cf. the author, quoted by Mahringer. A similar attitude can be found among the hunting rituals of the Navajo Indians; cf. R. Underhill (1953).

[4]Laughlin's observation gives full support to one of Lewis Mumford's main theses concerning the role of tools in the evolution of man.

[5]Today, when almost everything is made by machines, we notice little pleasure in skill except perhaps the pleasure people experience with hobbies like carpentry or the fascination of the average person when he can watch a goldsmith or weaver at his work; perhaps the fascination with a performing violinist is not only caused by the beauty of the music he produces but by the display of his skill. In cultures where most of the production is by hind and rests on skill, it is unmistakably clear that work is enjoyable because of the skill involved in it, and to the degree to which this skill is involved. The interpretation of the pleasure in hunting as pleasure in killing, rather than in skill, is indicative of the person of our time for whom the only thing that counts is the result of an effort, in this case killing, rather than the process itself.

[6]This is to some extent different in wars like that in Vietnam, in which the "native" enemy is not experienced as being human. Cf. p. 121-122.

[7]Cf. also, G. P. Murdock (1968).

[8]The same view has been expressed by the paleoanthropologist Helmuth de Terra (personal communication).

[9]Cf., for a vivid description of this general statement, Turnbull's presentation on the social life of a primitive African hunter society, the Mbutu Pygmies (C. M. Turnbull, 1965).

[10]The societies with which Service deals are the following: the Eskimos, the Algonkian and Athabascan hunters of Canada, the Shoshone of the Great Basin, the Indians of Tierra del Fuego, the Australians, the Semang of the Malay Peninsula, the Andaman Islanders.

[11]Peter Freuchen (1961).

[12]M. J. Meggitt (1960; quoted by E. R. Service, 1966), has arrived at almost identical conclusions with regard to Australian elders. Cf., also, the distinction made in E. Fromm (1941a), between rational and irrational authority.

[13]R. B. Lee ("What Hunters Do for a Living: Or How to Make Out on Scarce Resources") also questions the assumption that a hunter-gatherer life is generally a precarious one of struggle for existence: "Recent data on hunter-gatherers, show a radically different picture." (R. B. Lee and I. DeVore, 1968.)

[14]A similar point has been made by S. Piggott who writes: "Reputable archaeologists have sometimes failed to appreciate the fallacy inherent in rating prehistoric communities in terms of their

surviving material culture. Words such as ‘degenerate’ are taken from their usage to denote an assumed place in a typological series of pots, for instance, and transferred with an emotive and even moral connotation to the makers of the vessels: people with poor and scanty pottery become stigmatized as ‘poverty-stricken,’ though their poverty may well have been only in their failure to provide the archaeologist with his favorite product.” (S. Piggott, 1960.)

[15]Cf. Q. Wright (1965).

[16]I shall not discuss such older authors as W. J. Perry (1917, 1923, 1923a) and G. E. Smith (1924, 1924a) because they have been generally discarded by modern investigators, and it would take too much space to defend the value of their contributions.

[17]D. C. Rapaport, in his Foreword to Turney-High’s book (H. H. Turney-High, 1971), quotes the most eminent historian of war, Hans Delbrück who found “that the only detail Herodotus got right in his reconstruction of the battle of Marathon was the identities of the victors and vanquished.”

[18]Cf. also S. Andreski (1964), who takes a position similar to the one of this book and the other writers mentioned in the text. He cites a very interesting statement by a Chinese philosopher, Han Fei-tzu, c. fifth century B.C.: “The men of old did not till the field, but the fruits of plants and trees were sufficient for food. Nor did the women weave, for the furs of birds and animals were enough for clothing. Without working there was enough to live, there were few people and plenty of supplies, and therefore the people did not quarrel. So neither large rewards nor heavy punishments were used, but the people governed themselves. But nowadays people do not consider a family of five children as large, and each child having again five children, before the death of the grandfather, there may be twenty-five grandchildren. The result is that there are many people and few supplies, that one has to work hard for a meagre return. So the people fall to quarrelling and though rewards may be doubled and punishments heaped up, one does not get away from disorder.” (Quoted from J. J. L. Duyvendak, 1928.)

[19]In the following analysis I follow mainly V. G. Childe (1936), G. Clarke (1969), S. Cole (1967), J. Mellaart (1967), and the discussion of Childe’s viewpoint by G. Smolla (1967). A different hypothesis is suggested by C. O. Sauer (1952). I have also greatly benefited from Mumford’s treatment of the topic (1961, 1967).

[20]This does not imply that all hunters were nomadic and all agriculturists sedentary. Childe mentions a number of exceptions to this rule.

[21]Childe has been criticized for not having done justice to the complexity of the Neolithic development by speaking of “the Neolithic Revolution.” While this criticism has merit, it must on the other hand not be forgotten that the change in man’s mode of production is so fundamental that the word “revolution” seems to have its place. Cf. also, Mumford’s remarks pointing out that the dating of the great agricultural advance between 9000 and 7000 B.C. does not do justice to the fact that we are dealing with a gradual process that took place over a much longer period in four, possibly five stages. (L. Mumford, 1967.) He quotes especially O. Ames (1939) and E. Anderson (1952). I recommend Mumford’s analysis of the Neolithic culture to anyone interested in a more detailed and very penetrating picture.

[22]Childe elaborates on this theme in an interesting statement: “The lump of clay was perfectly plastic; man could mould it as he would. In making a toot of stone or bone he was always limited by the shape and size of the original material; he could only take bits away from it. No such limitations restrict the activity of the potter. She can form her lump as she wishes; she can go on adding to it without any doubts as to the solidity of the joints. In thinking of ‘creating,’ the free activity of the potter in ‘making form where there was no form’ constantly recurs to man’s mind; the similies in the Bible taken from the potter’s craft illustrate the point.” (V. G. Childe, 1936.)

[23]The most detailed picture of Çatal Hüyük is given by the archaeologist who directed the excavations, J. Mellaart (1967).

[24]In the following I shall sometimes use the term “matricentric” rather than matriarchal, because the latter implies that women ruled over men, which seems to be true in some cases—for instance, according to Mellaart, in Hacilar—but probably not in Çatal Hüyük, where the woman (mother) apparently played a dominant role, but not one of domination.

[25]Cf. L. Mumford’s (1967) stress on the importance of the sexual element in many of the female figurines; he is certainly right in this emphasis. It seems that it was only in the Anatolian Neolithic culture that this sexual element was absent. It remains a question for further investigation whether this sexual emphasis in other Neolithic cultures makes it necessary to qualify the idea that all Neolithic cultures were matriarchal.

[26]Matriarchal societies have been studied by Soviet scholars more than by their Western colleagues. This is due, one must assume, to the fact that Engels (1891) was greatly impressed by Bachofen’s (originally published 1861) and Morgan’s (1870) findings. Cf. Z. A. Abramova (1967), who discusses the mother-goddess in her double role of mistress of home and hearth and of sovereign mistress of animals, especially game animals. See also A. P. Okladnikov (1972), the Soviet anthropologist who points to the connection between matriarchy and the cult of death. Cf.,

furthermore, the interesting discussion of Paleolithic goddesses by A. Marshack (1972) who links the goddesses with the moon and the lunar calendar.

[27]Cf., also, E. Fromm (1934a, 1970e).

[28]It should be noted in passing that in many highly developed societies, such as the feudal society in the Middle Ages, the members of one occupational group—such as the guilds—did not strive for increasing material profit, but for enough to satisfy the traditional standard of living. Even the knowledge that the members of social classes above them had more luxuries to consume did not generate greed for this surplus consumption. The process of living was satisfying, and hence, no greater consumption appeared desirable. The same holds true for the peasants. Their rebellions in the sixteenth century were not because they wanted to consume as much as the class above them, but they wanted the basis for a dignified human existence and fulfillment of the traditional obligations the land owners had towards them.

[29]The term was coined by Childe (1936), and its use is criticized by Mumford (1967).

[30]Childe suggests that when the need for more land arose, older settlers had either to be taken away, to be replaced, or to be dominated *by* a conquering group, and hence that some sort *of* warfare must have been waged before the urban revolution had been consummated. But he admits that this cannot be demonstrated by archaeological evidence. He therefore takes the position that in the prelude to the urban revolution, after 6000 B.C. "warfare has to be admitted, though only on a small scale and of a spasmodic kind." (V. G. Childe, 1936.) However this may be, not before the city-state with its kings and its hierarchy had developed did bloody wars of conquest become a permanent institution.

[31]This view will be discussed in detail in chapter 11.

[32]This is more than a coincidence; it follows from our fundamental common position, the stress on the fundamental distinction between what serves life and what strangles it.

[33]I want to express my indebtedness to the late Ralph Linton, with whom I gave a seminar at Yale University in 1948 and 1949 on the character structure of primitive societies, for what I learned from him in these seminars and in many private conversations. I also want to express my appreciation for the stimulation I received from George P. Murdock who participated in these seminars, even though our views remained very different.

[34]The Zuñi, Dobu, Kwakiutl.

[35]The Arapesh, Greenland Eskimos, Bachiga, Ifugao, Kwakiutl, Manus, Iroquois, Ojibwa, Samoans, Zuñi, Bathonga, Dakota, Maori.

[36]The Tasmanians, Aranda, Samoans, Semang, Todas, Kazaks, Ainus, Polar Eskimos, Haidas, Crows, Iroquois, Hopi, Aztecs, Incas, Witotos, Nama Hotentots, and the Ganda. (I have not, however, considered in this context his description of the Aztecs and the Incas since they were highly developed and complex societies and therefore not suitable for this brief analysis.)

[37]The Mbutu.

[38]The Zuñi and the Kwakiutl are described both by R. Benedict and by M. Mead; the Iroquois and the Samoans are described both by M. Mead and G. P. Murdock; they are, of course, analyzed only once. Among the primitive hunters described by E. R. Service (1966), the Semangs, the Eskimos, and the Australians are among this sample. The Semangs and the Eskimos fall under system A, the Australians, under system B. I have not classified the Hopi because the structure of their society seems to be too contradictory to permit classification. They have many traits which would put them in system A, but their aggressiveness suggests some doubt whether they do not belong in system B. (Cf. D. Eggan, 1943.)

[39]The obsessional emphasis on sex by otherwise joyless people can be observed in present-day Western society among the “swingers” who practice group sex and are extremely bored, unhappy, and conventional people clinging to sexual satisfaction as the only relief from continuous boredom and loneliness. It may not be too different from those sectors of the consumer society, including also many members of the younger generation, for whom sexual consumption has been freed from restrictions, and for whom sex (like drugs) is the only relief in an otherwise bored and depressed mental state.

[40]A study that deals with aggressiveness among primitive peoples by studying the rate of homicide and suicide among forty nonliterate societies was undertaken by S. Palmer (1955). He combined homicidal and suicidal acts as destructive acts and compared their incidence in these forty societies. Among those he studied, there is one group with a low index of destructiveness (0-5); in this group we find eight cultures. One group with a medium degree of destructiveness (6-15); in this group are fourteen societies. One group with a very high degree of destructiveness (16-42); in this group there are eighteen cultures. If one combines low and medium aggressiveness, we find twenty-two with low and medium aggressiveness versus eighteen with high aggressiveness. Although this is a higher percentage of very aggressive societies than I found in my analysis of the thirty primitive cultures, nevertheless, Palmer’s analysis does not confirm the thesis of the extreme aggressiveness of primitive peoples.

[41]M. R. Davie (1929), for instance, brings ample material on primitive destructiveness and torture. Cf. also Q. Wright (1965) on warfare in civilization.

[42]Blanc points to the Dionysiac mysteries of ancient Greece and writes: “Finally, it may not be insignificant to note that St. Paul, in his Letter to the Corinthians, stresses with particular strength the motive of the real presence of Christ’s blood and flesh in the eucharistic ritual: a powerful means of promoting the penetration and acceptance of Christianity and its major ritual in Greece, where the tradition of the Dionysiac symbolic ritual meal was particularly strong and deeply felt.” (A. C. Blanc, 1961.)

Part III:

The Varieties of Aggression and Destructiveness and Their Respective Conditions

9. Benign Aggression

Preliminary Remarks

THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED in the previous chapter has led to the conclusion that defensive aggressiveness is "built in" in the animal and human brain and serves the function of defense against threats to vital interests.

If human aggression were more or less at the same level as that of other mammals—particularly that of our nearest relative, the chimpanzee—human society would be rather peaceful and nonviolent. But this is not so. Man's history is a record of extraordinary destructiveness and cruelty, and human aggression, it seems, far surpasses that of man's animal ancestors, and man is, in contrast to most animals, a real "killer."

How are we to explain this "hyperaggression" in man? Does it have the same source as animal aggression, or is man endowed with some other specifically human potential for destructiveness?

An argument can be made for the first assumption by pointing out that animals, too, exhibit extreme and vicious destructiveness when the environmental and social balance is disturbed, although this occurs only as an exception—for instance, under conditions of crowding. It could be concluded that man is so much more destructive because he has created conditions like crowding or other aggression-producing constellations that have become normal rather than exceptional in his history. Hence, man's hyperaggression is not due to a greater aggressive *potential* but to the fact that aggression-producing *conditions* are much more frequent for humans than for animals living in their natural habitat.[1]

This argument is valid—as far as it goes. It is also important, because it leads to a critical analysis of man's condition in history. It suggests that man, during most of his history, has lived in a zoo and not "in the wild"—i.e., under the condition of liberty conducive to human growth and well-being. Indeed, most data about man's "nature" are basically of the same order as Zuckerman's original data on the Monkey Hill baboons in the London Zoo. (S. Zuckerman, 1932.)

But the fact remains that man often acts cruelly and destructively even in situations that do not include crowding. Destructiveness and cruelty can cause him to feel intense satisfaction; masses of men can suddenly be seized by lust for blood. Individuals and groups may have a character structure that makes them eagerly wait for—or create—situations that permit the expression of destructiveness.

Animals, on the other hand, do not enjoy inflicting pain and suffering on other animals, nor do they kill "for nothing." Sometimes an animal seems to exhibit sadistic behavior—for instance, a cat playing with a mouse; but it is an anthropomorphic interpretation to assume that the cat enjoys the suffering of the mouse; any fast-moving object can serve as a plaything, whether it is a mouse or a ball of wool. Or, to take another example: Lorenz reports an incident of two doves caged together in too-close confinement. The stronger one flayed the other alive, feather by feather, until Lorenz came and separated them. But here again, what might seem a manifestation of unrestricted cruelty is really a reaction to the deprivation of space and falls under the category of defensive aggression.

The wish to destroy for the sake of destruction is different. Only man seems to take pleasure in destroying life without any reason or purpose other than that of destroying. To put it more generally, only man appears to be destructive beyond the aim of defense or of attaining what he needs.

The thesis to be developed in this chapter is that man's destructiveness and cruelty cannot be explained in terms of animal heredity or in terms of a destructive instinct, but must be understood on the basis of those factors by which man *differs* from his animal ancestors. The problem is to examine *in what manner and to what degree the specific conditions of human existence are responsible for the quality and intensity* of *man's lust for killing and torturing*.[2]

Even to the degree that man's aggressiveness has the same defensive character as the animal's, it is much more frequent, for reasons that lie in the human condition. This chapter will deal first with man's defensive aggression and then with what is unique in man.

If we agree to call "aggression" all acts that cause, and are intended to cause, damage to another person, animal, or inanimate object, the most fundamental distinction among all kinds of impulses subsumed under the category of aggression is that between *biologically adaptive, life-serving, benign aggression and biologically nonadaptive, malignant aggression.*

This distinction has already been mentioned in the discussion of the neurophysiological aspects of aggression. To sum up briefly: biologically adaptive aggression is a response to threats to vital interests; it is phylogenetically programmed; it is common to animals and men; it is not spontaneous or self-increasing but reactive and defensive; it aims at the removal of the threat, either by destroying or by removing its source.

Biologically nonadaptive, malignant aggression, i.e., destructiveness and cruelty, is not a defense against a threat; it is not phylogenetically programmed; it is characteristic only of man, it is biologically harmful because it is socially disruptive; its main manifestations—killing and cruelty—are pleasureful without needing any other purpose; it is harmful not only to the person who is attacked but also to the attacker. Malignant aggression, though not an instinct, is a human potential rooted in the very conditions of human existence.

The distinction between biologically adaptive aggression and biologically nonadaptive aggression ought to help to clarify a confusion in the whole discussion of human aggression. Those who explain the frequency and intensity of human aggression as being due to an innate trait of human nature often force their opponents, who have refused to relinquish the hope for a peaceful world, to minimize the degree of man's destructiveness and cruelty. Thus the defenders of hope have often been driven into taking a defensive and overoptimistic view of man. The distinction between defensive and malignant aggression makes this unnecessary. It only implies that the malignant part of man's aggression is not innate, and hence not ineradicable, but it admits that malignant aggression is a human potential and more than a learned pattern of behavior that readily disappears when new patterns are introduced.

Part Three will examine the nature of and conditions for both benign and malignant aggression, while dealing at much greater length with the latter. Before starting, I want to remind the reader that in contrast to behaviorist theory, the following analysis of all types of aggression has as its subject matter aggressive *impulses,* regardless of whether or not they are expressed in aggressive *behavior.*

Pseudoaggression

By pseudoaggression I refer to those aggressive acts that may cause harm, but are not intended to do so.

Accidental Aggression

The most obvious example of pseudoaggression is accidental, unintended aggression, i.e., an aggressive act that hurts another person, but was not intended to do any harm. The classical example for this type of aggression is the firing of a gun which accidentally hurts or kills a bystander. Psychoanalysis has somewhat reduced the simplicity of the legal definition of accidental acts by introducing the concept of unconscious motivation, so that one can raise the question of whether what appears to be accidental was not unconsciously intended by the aggressor. This consideration would decrease the number of cases that fall under the category of unintended aggression, but it would be a purely dogmatic oversimplification to assume that every accidental aggression is due to unconscious motives.

Playful Aggression

Playful aggression has as its aim the exercise of skill. It does not aim at destruction or harm, and it is not motivated by hate. While fencing, sword fighting, and archery developed from the need to kill an enemy in defense or attack, their original function has been almost completely lost, and they have become an art. This art is practiced, for instance, in Zen Buddhist sword fighting, which requires great skill, complete control of the whole body, complete concentration—qualities it shares with an art apparently as completely different as that of the tea ceremony. A Zen master of sword fighting does not harbor the wish to kill or destroy, nor has he any hate. He makes the proper movement, and if the opponent is killed, it is because the latter "stood in the wrong place."[3] A classic psychoanalyst may argue that unconsciously the sword fighter is motivated by hate and the wish to destroy his opponent; this is his privilege, but he would show little grasp of the spirit of Zen Buddhism.

The bow and arrow were also once weapons of attack and defense with an aim to destroy, but today the art of archery is a pure exercise in skill, as is shown so instructively in E. Herrigel's little book *Zen in the Art of*

Archery (1953). In Western culture we find the same phenomenon, that fencing and sword fighting have become a sport. Though these may not involve the spiritual aspects of Zen art, they also represent a kind of fighting without the intention to harm. Similarly, among primitive tribes we also frequently find fighting that seems to be largely a display of skill and only in a minor way an expression of destructiveness.

Self-Assertive Aggression

By far the most important case of pseudoaggression is that which is more or less equivalent to self-assertion. It is aggression in the literal sense of its root—*aggredi*, from *ad gradi (gradus* means "step" and *ad*, "toward"), which means "to move (go, step) forward"—just as regression, from *regredi,* means "to move backward." *Aggredi,* or in the now obsolete English form "to aggress" is an intransitive verb. One can aggress, i.e., move forward, but one cannot "aggress" *somebody,* in the sense that one can attack somebody. The word "aggress" must early have assumed the meaning of attack, since, in war, moving forward was usually the beginning of an attack.

To be aggressive, in its original meaning of "aggressing can be defined as *moving forward toward a goal without undue hesitation, doubt, or fear.*

The concept of assertive aggression seems to find some confirmation in observations made of the link between the male hormone and aggression. A number of experiments have shown that male hormones tend to generate aggressive behavior. For an answer to the question why this should be so, we must consider that one of the most basic differences between male and female is the difference in function during the sexual act. The anatomic and physiological conditions of male sexual functioning require that the male be capable of piercing the hymen of the virgin, that he should not be deterred by the fear, hesitation, or even resistance she might manifest; in animals, the male must hold the female in position during the act of mounting. Since the male capacity to function sexually is a basic requirement for the survival of the species, one might expect that nature has endowed the male with some special aggressive potential. This expectation appears to be borne out by a number of data.

Many experiments have been made to study the connection between aggression and either the castration of the male or the effects of injecting

male hormones into a castrated male. The basic studies in this field were done in the forties.[4] One of the classic experiments is that described by Beeman. He showed that when adult male mice (twenty-five days old) were castrated, sometime after the operation they no longer fought as they did before castration, but instead behaved peacefully. However, if the same animal were then administered male hormones, they began fighting again, stopping once more when the male hormone was withdrawn. Beeman could also demonstrate, however, that the mice did not stop fighting if they were not given a rest after the operation, but were conditioned to a continued daily routine of fighting. (E. A. Beeman, 1947.) This indicates that the male hormone was a *stimulation* for fighting behavior, but not a condition without which it could not occur.

Similar experiments have also been done with chimpanzees by G. Clark and H. G. Bird (1946). The result was that the male hormone raised the level of aggressiveness (dominance) and the female hormone lowered it. Later experiments—for instance, those reported by E. B. Sigg—confirm the older work of Beeman and others. Sigg comes to the conclusion: “It may be stated that the precipitation of aggressive behavior in isolated mice is probably based on multi-hormonal imbalance lowering the threshold to the aggression-eliciting trigger stimulus. The male gonadal hormones are critically involved in this response whereas other endocrine changes (adrenocortical, adreno-medullary and thyroid) may be contributory and consequential.” (S. Garattini and E. B. Sigg, ed., 1969.)

Of the other papers in the same volume dealing with the problem of the relationship of sex hormones and aggression, I want to mention only one more study, that by K. M. J. Lagerspetz. He reports on experiments that tend to demonstrate that in mice conditioned to be highly aggressive, both mounting and copulation were totally inhibited, while in mice conditioned to be nonaggressive, sexual behavior was not inhibited. The author concludes that “these results suggest that these two types of behavior are alternatives which can be selectively inhibited and reinforced [and they] do not substantiate the belief that aggressive and sexual behavior are due to a common arousal which is further channeled by environmental stimuli.” (K. M. J. Lagerspetz, 1969.) Such a conclusion contradicts the assumption that aggressive impulses contribute to male sexual impulses. It is outside my competence to evaluate this apparent contradiction. I shall, however, offer a hypothetical suggestion a little further on in the text.

Another possible basis for the assumption of a connection between maleness and aggression are the findings and speculations on the nature of the Y chromosome. The female carries two sex chromosomes (XX); the male pair of sex chromosomes consists of one X and one Y (XY). However, in the process of cell division abnormal developments can occur, the most important one from the standpoint of aggression being a male who has one X and two Y chromosomes (XYY). (There are other constellations having an extra sex chromosome which do not interest us here.) XYY individuals seem to show certain physical abnormalities. They are usually above average in height, rather dull, and with a relatively high incidence of epileptic and epileptoform conditions. The feature that interests us here is that they may also show an extraordinary amount of aggressiveness. This assumption was first made on the basis of a study of mentally abnormal (violent and dangerous) inmates in a special security institution in Edinburgh (P. A. Jacobs *et al,* 1965). Seven of the one hundred ninety-seven males were of an XYY constitution (3.5 per 1,000), which is probably a significantly higher percentage than that found in the general population.[5] After the publication of this work about a dozen other studies have been made whose results tend to confirm and enlarge upon those of the first one.[6] These studies, however, do not permit any definite conclusions, and assumptions based on them must await confirmation by research done on larger samples and using more refined methods.[7]

Male aggression has usually been understood in the literature as not different from what is generally called aggression—that is, attacking behavior aimed at doing damage to another person. But if this were the nature of male aggression, it would be very puzzling from a biological standpoint. What could be the biological function of a hostile, damaging male attitude toward the female? It would be disruptive to the elementary bond of male-female relationship, and still more importantly from a biological standpoint, it would tend to damage the female, on whom rests the responsibility of bearing and rearing children.[8] While it is true that under certain constellations, especially those of patriarchal dominance and exploitation of women, a deep antagonism develops between the sexes, it would be inexplicable why such antagonism should be desirable from a biological standpoint and that it should have developed as a result of the evolutionary process. On the other hand, as I remarked before, it is biologically necessary for the male to have a capacity for moving forward

and of overcoming obstacles. This, however, is not in itself a hostile or attacking behavior; it is self-assertive aggression. That male aggression is basically different from destructiveness or cruelty is confirmed by the fact that there is no evidence whatsoever that would lead to the assumption that women are less destructive or cruel than men.

This view would seem also to explain some of the difficulties implied in the previously cited experiment by Lagerspetz, who found that mice showing a high degree of fighting behavior had no interest in copulation. (K. M. J. Lagerspetz, 1969.) If aggression in the sense in which it is generally used were part of male sexuality, or even stimulated it, we should expect the opposite result. The apparent contradiction between Lagerspetz's experiments and those of other authors seems to find a simple solution if we differentiate between hostile aggression and aggression in the sense of moving forward. The fighting mice, we can assume, are in a hostile, attacking mood that excludes sexual stimulation. On the other hand, the administration of male hormones in the other experiments does not generate hostility but the tendency to move forward and hence to reduce inhibitions of normal fighting behavior.

Lagerspetz's thesis is borne out by observation of normal human behavior. People in a state of anger and hostility have little sexual appetite and sexual stimuli do not greatly affect them. I am speaking here of hostile angry, attacking tendencies, and not of sadism, which is, indeed, compatible and often blended with sexual impulses. In brief, anger, i.e., basically defensive aggression, weakens sexual interest; *sadistic* and *masochistic* impulses, while not generated by sexual behavior, are compatible with it, or stimulating.

Self-assertive aggression is not restricted to sexual behavior. It is a basic quality required in many life situations, such as in the behavior of a surgeon and of a mountain climber and in most sports; it is also a quality necessary for the hunter. A successful salesman also needs this type of aggression, and this is expressed when one speaks of an "aggressive salesman." In all these situations, successful performance is possible only when the person involved is endowed with unimpeded self-assertion—that is, if he can pursue his aim with determination and without being deterred by obstacles. Of course, this quality is also necessary in a person who attacks an enemy. A general lacking in aggressiveness in this sense will be a hesitant and poor officer; an attacking soldier who lacks it will easily

retreat. But one must differentiate between aggression with the aim to damage and the self-assertive aggression that only facilitates the pursuit of a goal, whether it is to damage or to create.

In animal experiments where the injection of male hormones renews or increases the fighting capacity of the animal, one has to distinguish carefully between two possible interpretations: (1) that the hormones generate rage and aggression, and (2) that they increase the self-assertion of the animal in pursuing its already existing hostile aims that were integrated by other sources. In reviewing the experiments on the influence of male hormones on aggression, my impression is that both interpretations are possible, but for biological reasons the second seems more likely. Further experiments focused on this difference will probably offer convincing evidence for the one or the other hypothesis.

The connection between self-assertion, aggression, male hormones, and—possibly—Y chromosomes suggests the possibility that men may be equipped with more self-assertive aggression than women and make better generals, surgeons, or hunters, while women may be more protective and caring and make better physicians and teachers. No conclusion can be drawn, of course, from the behavior of women today, since it is largely the result of the existing patriarchal order. Furthermore, the whole question would have a purely statistical and not an individual significance. Many men lack self-assertive aggressiveness, and many women perform excellently those tasks that require it. Obviously, there is not a simple relationship between maleness and the self-assertive aggressiveness, but a highly complex one about whose details we know almost nothing. This is no surprise to the geneticist who knows that a genetic disposition can be translated into a certain type of behavior, but can be understood only in terms of its interconnection with other genetic dispositions and with the total life situation into which a person is born and has to live. It must furthermore be considered that self-assertive aggression is a necessary quality for survival and not only for the performance of the particular activities mentioned above; hence it is a biologically reasonable assumption that all human beings are endowed with it, and not only men. Whether the specific male aggression affects only sexual behavior or, on the other hand, whether the phenomenon of the inherent bisexuality of men and women takes sufficient care of female assertive aggression must remain idle

speculation until a great many more empirical data on the influence of male hormones and chromosomes are available.

There is, however, one important fact that has been pretty well established clinically. The person with an unimpeded self-assertive aggression tends, in general, to be less hostile in a defensive sense than the person whose self-assertion is defective. This holds true both for defensive aggression and for malignant aggression like sadism. The reasons for this are easy to see. As to the first, defensive aggression is a response to a threat. The person with unimpeded self-assertive aggression feels less easily threatened and, hence, is less readily in a position of having to react with aggression. The sadistic person is sadistic because he is suffering from an impotence of the heart, from the incapacity to move the other, to make him respond, to make oneself a loved person. He compensates for that impotence with the passion to have power *over* others. Since self-assertive aggression enhances the person's capacity for achieving his aims, its possession greatly diminishes the need for sadistic control.[9]

As a final observation on self-assertive aggression, I would indicate that the degree to which it is developed in a given person is of great significance for his whole character structure and for certain forms of neurotic symptoms. The shy or inhibited person, as well as the one with compulsive obsessional tendencies, suffers from an impediment of this type of aggression. The therapeutic task is, first, to help the person to become aware of this impediment, then, to understand how it developed, and most importantly, to understand by what other factors in his character system and in his environment it is supported and supplied with energy.

Perhaps the most important factor that leads to the weakening of self-assertive aggression is an authoritarian atmosphere in family and society, where self-assertion is equated with disobedience, attack, sin. For all irrational and exploitative forms of authority, self-assertion—the pursuit by another of his real goals—is the arch sin because it is a threat to the power of the authority; the person subject to it is indoctrinated to believe that the aims of the authority are also his, and that obedience offers the optimal chance for fulfilling oneself.

Defensive Aggression

Difference Between Animals and Man

Defensive aggression is biologically adaptive, for reasons already mentioned in the discussions of the neurophysiological basis of aggression. To repeat them briefly: the brain of animals is phylogenetically programmed to mobilize attack or flight impulses when vital interests of the animal are threatened, such as food, space, the young, access to females. Basically, the aim is to remove the danger; this can be done, and more often than not is done, by flight, or if flight is not possible, by fighting or assuming effective threatening postures. The aim of defensive aggression is not lust for destruction, but the preservation of life. Once the aim has been attained, the aggression and its emotional equivalents disappear.

Man, too, is phylogenetically programmed to react with attack or flight if his vital interests are threatened. Even though this innate tendency operates less rigidly in man than in lower mammals, there is no lack of evidence that man tends to be motivated by his phylogenetically prepared tendency for defensive aggression when his life, health, freedom, or property (in those societies where private property exists and is highly valued) are threatened. To be sure, this reaction can be overcome by moral or religious convictions and training, but it is in practice the reaction of most individuals and groups. In fact, defensive aggression accounts perhaps for most of man’s aggressive impulses.

It could be said that the neural equipment for defensive aggression is identical in animals and man; this statement is correct, however, only in a limited sense. This is mainly because these aggression-integrating areas are part of the *whole* brain, and because the human brain with its large neocortex and its vastly greater number of neural connections is different from the animal brain.

But even though the neurophysiological basis for defensive aggression is not identical with that of the animal, it is similar enough to permit the statement that *this same neurophysiological equipment leads to an incidence of defensive aggression many times greater in man than in the animal.* The reason for this phenomenon lies in specific conditions of *human* existence. They are, mainly, the following:

1. The animal perceives as a threat only “clear and present danger.” To be sure, its instinctive equipment and its individually acquired and genetically inherited memories induce the awareness of dangers and threats often more accurately than they are perceived by man.

But man, being endowed with a capacity for foresight and imagination, reacts not only to present dangers and threats or to memories of dangers and threats but to the dangers and threats he can imagine as possibly happening in the future. He may conclude, for instance, that because his tribe is richer than a neighboring tribe that is well trained in warfare, the other will attack his own sometime from now. Or he may reason that a neighbor whom he has harmed will take revenge when the time is favorable. In the political field the calculation of future threats is one of the central preoccupations of politicians and generals. If an individual or a group feels threatened, the mechanism of defensive aggression is mobilized even though the threat is not immediate; hence man's capacity to foresee future threats enhances the frequency of his aggressive reactions.

2. Man is capable not only of foreseeing real dangers in the future: he is also capable of being persuaded and brainwashed by his leaders to see dangers when in reality they do not exist. Most modern wars, for instance, have been prepared by systematic propaganda of this type; the population was persuaded by its leaders that it was in danger of being attacked and destroyed, and thus reactions of hate against the threatening nations have been provoked. Often no threat existed. Especially since the French Revolution, with the appearance of large citizens' armies rather than relatively small armies consisting of professional soldiers, it is not easy for a nation's leader to tell the people to kill and be killed because industry wants cheaper raw materials, cheaper labor, or new markets. Only a minority would be willing to participate in the war if it were justified by declaring such aims. If, on the other hand, a government can make the population believe that it is being threatened, the normal biological reaction against threat is mobilized. In addition, these predictions of threat from the outside are often self-fulfilling: the aggressor state, by preparing for war, forces the state that is about to be attacked to prepare also, thereby providing the "proof" of the alleged threat.

The arousal of defensive aggression by means of brain-washing can occur only in humans. In order to persuade people that they are threatened, one needs, above all, the medium of language; without this, most suggestion would be impossible. In addition, one needs a social structure that provides a sufficient basis for brainwashing. It is hard to imagine, for example, that this kind of suggestion would work among the Mbutu, the African pygmy hunters living contentedly in the forest and having no

permanent authorities. In their society there is no man with sufficient power to make the incredible credible. On the other hand, in a society that has figures carrying great authority—such as sorcerers or political and religious leaders—the basis for such suggestion is present. By and large, the power of suggestion exercised by a ruling group is in proportion to the group's power over the ruled and/or the capacity of the rulers to use an elaborate ideological system to reduce the faculty of critical and independent thinking.

A third specifically human condition of existence contributes to a further increase of human defensive aggressiveness compared with animal aggressiveness. Man, like the animal, defends himself against threat to his vital interests. *But the range of man's vital interests is much wider than that of the animal.* Man must survive not only physically but also psychically. He needs to maintain a certain psychic equilibrium lest he lose the capacity to function; for man everything necessary for the maintenance of his psychic equilibrium is of the same vital interest as that which serves his physical equilibrium. First of all, man has a vital interest in retaining his frame of orientation. His capacity to act depends on it, and in the last analysis, his sense of identity. If others threaten him with ideas that question his own frame of orientation, he will react to these ideas as to a vital threat. He may rationalize this reaction in many ways. He will say that the new ideas are inherently "immoral," "uncivilized," "crazy," or whatever else he can think of to express his repugnance, but this antagonism is in fact aroused because "he" feels threatened.

Man needs not only a frame of orientation but also objects of devotion, which become a vital necessity for his emotional equilibrium. Whatever they are—values, ideals, ancestors, father, mother, the soil, country, class, religion, and hundreds of other phenomena—they are perceived as sacred. Even customs can become sacred because they symbolize the existing values.[10] The individual—or the group—reacts to an attack against the "sacred" with the same rage and aggressiveness as to an attack against life.

What has been said about reactions to threats to vital interests can be expressed also in a different and more generalized way by stating that fright tends to mobilize either aggression or the tendency to flight. The latter is often the case when a person still has a way out that saves a modicum of "face," but if he is driven into a corner and no possibility of evasion is left, the aggressive reaction is more likely to occur. One factor, however, must

not be overlooked: the flight reaction depends on the interaction of two factors: the first is the magnitude of the realistic threat, the second is the degree of physical and psychical strength and self-confidence of the threatened person. On the one end of the continuum will be events which will frighten virtually everybody; on the other, there will be such a sense of helplessness and impotence that almost everything will frighten the anxious person. Hence fright is as much conditioned by real threats as it is by an inner environment that generates it even with little outside stimulation.

Fright, like pain, is a most uncomfortable feeling, and man will do almost anything to get rid of it. There are many ways to get rid of fright and anxiety, such as the use of drugs, sexual arousal, sleep, and the company of others. One of the most effective ways of getting rid of anxiety is to become aggressive. When a person can get out of the passive state of fright and begin to attack, the painful nature of fright disappears.[11]

Aggression and Freedom

Among all the threats to man's vital interests, the threat to his freedom is of extraordinary importance, individually and socially. In contrast to the widely held opinion that this desire for freedom is a product of culture and more specifically of learning-conditioning, there is ample evidence to suggest that the desire for freedom is a biological reaction of the human organism.

One phenomenon that supports this view is that throughout history nations and classes have fought their oppressors if there was any possibility of victory, and often even if there was none. The history of mankind is, indeed, a history of the fight for freedom, a history of revolutions, from the war of liberation of the Hebrews against the Egyptians, the national uprisings against the Roman Empire, the German peasant rebellions in the sixteenth century, to the American, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Algerian, and Vietnamese revolutions.[12] Leaders have all too frequently used the slogan that they are leading their people in a battle for freedom, when in reality their aim has been to enslave them. That no promise appeals more powerfully to the heart of man is evidenced by the phenomenon that even those leaders who want to suppress freedom find it necessary to promise it.

Another reason for assuming there is an inherent impulse in man to fight for freedom lies in the fact that freedom is the condition for the full growth of a person, for his mental health and his well-being: its absence cripples man and is unhealthy. Freedom does not imply lack of constraint, since any growth occurs only within a structure, and any structure requires constraint. (H. von Foerster, 1970.) What matters is whether the constraint functions primarily for the sake of another person or institution, or whether it is autonomous—i.e., that it results from the necessities of growth inherent in the structure of the person.

As a condition for the unstunted development of the human organism, freedom is a vital biological interest of man,[13] and threats to his freedom arouse defensive aggression as do all other threats to vital interests. Is it surprising then that aggression and violence continue to be generated in a world in which the majority are deprived of freedom, especially the people in the so-called underdeveloped countries? Those in power—i.e., the whites—would perhaps be less surprised and indignant if they were not accustomed to considering the yellows, the browns and the blacks as nonpersons and, hence, not expected to react humanly.[14]

But there is an additional reason for this blindness. Even the whites, powerful as they are, have surrendered their freedom because their own system has forced them to do so, although in a less drastic and overt way. Perhaps they hate those who fight for it today all the more because they are reminded of their own surrender.

The fact that genuine revolutionary aggression, like all aggression generated by the impulse to defend one's life, freedom or dignity, is biologically rational and part of normal human functioning must not deceive one into forgetting that destruction of life always remains destruction, even when it is biologically justified; it is a matter of one's religious, moral, or political principles whether one believes that it is humanly justified or not. But whatever one's principles in this respect are, it is important to be aware how easily purely defensive aggression is blended with (nondefensive) destructiveness and with the sadistic wish to reverse the situation by controlling others instead of being controlled. If and when this happens, revolutionary aggression is vitiated and tends to renew the conditions it was seeking to abolish.

Aggression and Narcissism[15]

In addition to the factors already discussed, one of the most important sources of defensive aggression is the wounding of *narcissism*.

The concept of narcissism was formulated by Freud in terms of his libido theory. Since the schizophrenic patient does not seem to have any "libidinous" relationship to objects (either in reality or in phantasy), Freud was led to the question: "What has happened to the libido which has been withdrawn from external objects in schizophrenia?" His answer was: "The libido that has been withdrawn from the external world has been directed to the ego and thus gives rise to an attitude which may be called narcissism." In addition, Freud assumed that the original state of man in early infancy was narcissism ("primary narcissism"), in which there were not yet any relationships to the outside world; in the course of normal development the child increased his libidinal relationships to the outside world in scope and intensity, but tinder special circumstances (the most drastic one being insanity) the libido is withdrawn from objects and directed back to the ego ("secondary narcissism"); even in the case of normal development, however, a human being remains to some extent narcissistic throughout his life. (S. Freud, 1914.)

In spite of this statement, the concept of narcissism has not played the important role it deserves in the clinical investigations of psychoanalysts. It has been mainly applied to early infancy and to psychoses,[16] but its far-reaching importance lies precisely in its role for the normal, or the so-called neurotic personality. This role can be fully understood only if narcissism is freed from the restricting frame of reference of the libido theory. Narcissism can then be described as a state of experience in which only the person himself, *his* body, *his* needs, *his* feelings, *his* thoughts, *his* property, everything and everybody pertaining to *him* are experienced as fully real, while everybody and everything that does not form part of the person or is not an object of his needs is not interesting, is not fully real, is perceived only by intellectual recognition, while *affectively* without weight and color. A person, to the extent to which he is narcissistic, has a double standard of perception. Only he himself and what pertains to him has significance, while the rest of the world is more or less weightless of colorless, and because of this double standard the narcissistic person shows severe defects in judgment and lacks the capacity for objectivity.[17]

Often the narcissistic person achieves a sense of security in his own entirely subjective conviction of his perfection, his superiority over others,

his extraordinary qualities, and not through being related to others or through any real work or achievement of his own. He needs to hold on to his narcissistic self-image, since his sense of worth as well as his sense of identity are based on it. If his narcissism is threatened, *he* is threatened in a vitally important area. When others wound his narcissism by slighting him, criticizing him, showing him up when he has said something wrong, defeating him in a game or on numerous other occasions, a narcissistic person usually reacts with intense anger or rage, whether or not he shows it or is even aware of it. The intensity of this aggressive reaction can often be seen in the fact that such a person will never forgive someone who has wounded his narcissism and often feels a desire for vengeance which would be less intense if his body or his property had been attacked.

Most persons are not aware of their own narcissism, but only of those of its manifestations which do not overtly reveal it. Thus, for instance, they will feel an inordinate admiration for their parents or for their children, and they have no difficulty in expressing these feelings because such behavior is usually judged positively as filial piety, parental affection, or loyalty; but if they were to express their feelings about their own person, such as "I am the most wonderful person in the world," "I am better than anyone else," etc., they would be suspected not only of being extraordinarily vain, but perhaps even of not being quite sane. On the other hand, if a person has achieved something that finds recognition in the field of art, science, sports, business, or politics, his narcissistic attitude appears not only to be realistic and rational, but is also constantly fed by the admiration of others. In these cases he can give full rein to his narcissism because it has been socially sanctioned and confirmed.[18] In present-day Western society there is a peculiar interconnection between the narcissism of the celebrity and the needs of the public. The latter wants to be in touch with famous people because the life of the average person is empty and boring. The mass media live from selling fame, and thus everybody is satisfied; the narcissistic performer, the public, and the fame merchants.

Among political leaders a high degree of narcissism is very frequent; it may be considered an occupational illness—or asset—especially among those who owe their power to their influence over mass audiences. If the leader is convinced of his extraordinary gifts and of his mission, it will be easier to convince the large audiences who are attracted by men who appear to be so absolutely certain. But the narcissistic leader does not use his

narcissistic charisma only as a means for political success; he needs success and applause for the sake of his own mental equilibrium. The idea of his greatness and infallibility is essentially based on his narcissistic grandiosity, not on his real achievements as a human being.[19] And yet he cannot do without the narcissistic inflation because his human core—conviction, conscience, love, and faith—is not very developed. Extremely narcissistic persons are often almost forced to become famous, since otherwise they might become depressed and insane. But it takes much talent—and appropriate opportunities—to influence others to such a degree that their applause validates these narcissistic dreams. Even when such people succeed, they are driven to seek further success, since for them failure carries the danger of collapse. Popular success is, as it were, their self-therapy against depression and madness. In fighting for their aims, they are really fighting for their sanity.

When, in group narcissism, the object is not the individual but the group to which he belongs, the individual can be fully aware of it, and express it without any restrictions. The assertion that "my country" (or nation, or religion) is the most wonderful, the most cultured, the most powerful, the most peace-loving. etc., does not sound crazy at all; on the contrary, it sounds like the expression of patriotism, faith, and loyalty. It also appears to be a realistic and rational value judgment because it is shared by many members of the same group. This consensus succeeds in transforming the phantasy into reality, since for most people reality is constituted by general consensus and not based on reason or critical examination.[20]

Group narcissism has important functions. In the first place, it furthers the solidarity and cohesion of the group, and makes manipulation easier by appealing to narcissistic prejudices. Secondly, it is extremely important as an element giving satisfaction to the members of the group and particularly to those who have few other reasons to feel proud and worthwhile. Even if one is the most miserable, the poorest, the least respected member of a group, there is compensation for one's miserable condition in feeling "I am a part of the most wonderful group in the world. I, who in reality am a worm, become a giant through belonging to the group." Consequently, the degree of group narcissism is commensurate with the lack of real satisfaction in life. Those social classes which enjoy life more are less fanatical (fanaticism is a characteristic quality of group narcissism) than

those which, like the lower middle classes, suffer from scarcity in all material and cultural areas and lead a life of unmitigated boredom.

At the same time, fostering group narcissism is very inexpensive from the standpoint of the social budget; in fact, it costs practically nothing compared with the social expense required to raise the standard of living. Society has only to pay ideologists who formulate the slogans that generate social narcissism; indeed, many social functionaries, like school teachers, journalists, ministers, and professors, participate even without being paid, at least with money. They receive their reward from feeling proud and satisfied to be serving such a worthy cause—and through enhanced prestige and promotion.

Those whose narcissism refers to their group rather than to themselves as individuals are as sensitive as the individual narcissist, and they react with rage to any wound, real or imaginary, inflicted upon their group. If anything, they react more intensely and certainly more consciously. An individual, unless he is mentally very sick, may have at least some doubts about his personal narcissistic image. The member of the group has none, since his narcissism is shared by the majority. In case of conflict between groups that challenge each other's collective narcissism, this very challenge arouses intense hostility in each of them. The narcissistic image of one's own group is raised to its highest point, while the devaluation of the opposing group sinks to the lowest. One's own group becomes a defender of human dignity, decency, morality, and right. Devilish qualities are ascribed to the other group; it is treacherous, ruthless, cruel, and basically inhuman. The violation of one of the symbols of group narcissism—such as the flag, or the person of the emperor, the president, or an ambassador—is reacted to with such intense fury and aggression by the people that they are even willing to support their leaders in a policy of war.

Group narcissism is one of the most important sources of human aggression, and yet this, like all other forms of defensive aggression, is a reaction to an attack on vital interests. It differs from other forms of defensive aggression in that intense narcissism in itself is a semipathological phenomenon. In considering the causes and the function of bloody and cruel mass massacres as they occurred between Hindus and Moslems at the time of the partition of India or recently between Bengali Moslems and their Pakistani rulers, group narcissism certainly plays a considerable role; this is not surprising if we appreciate the fact that we are

dealing here with virtually the poorest and most miserable populations anywhere in the world. But certainly narcissism is not the only cause of these phenomena, whose other aspects will be discussed later.

Aggression and Resistance

Another important source of defensive aggression is aggression as a reaction to any attempt to bring repressed strivings and phantasies into awareness. This type of reaction is one of the aspects of what Freud called "resistance," and it has been explored systematically by the psychoanalytic method. Freud found that if the analyst touched on repressed material the patient would "resist" his therapeutic approach. This is not a matter of conscious unwillingness on the part of the patient or of dishonesty or of secretiveness; he is defending himself against the discovery of the unconscious material without being aware either of the material or of his resistance. There are many reasons why a person may repress certain strivings, often throughout his life. He might be afraid of being punished, of not being loved, or of being humiliated if his repressed impulses were known to others (or to himself, in so far as self-respect and self-love are concerned).

Psychoanalytic therapy has shown the many different reactions resistance can generate. The patient can turn away from the sensitive topic and talk about something else; he can feel sleepy and tired; he can find a reason not to come to the interview—or he can become very angry against the analyst and find some reason to quit the analysis. Here is a brief example: a writer I was analyzing, who was proud of his lack of opportunism, told me during a session that he had changed a manuscript because he thought by this change he would make a better case for his message. He thought he had made the right decision and was surprised that afterwards he felt somewhat depressed and had a headache. I suggested that his real motive probably was that he expected the changed version to be more popular and to result in more fame and money for him than the original one; furthermore, that his depressed mood and his headache probably had something to do with this act of self-betrayal. I had hardly finished saying this when he jumped up shouting at me with intense rage that I was a sadist, that I enjoyed spoiling his anticipated pleasure, an envious man begrudging his future success, an ignorant man who knew

nothing about his field of writing, and many more invectives. (It must be noted that the patient was normally a very courteous man who, both before and after this outburst, treated me with respect.) He could hardly have done more to confirm my interpretation. The mention of his unconscious motivation was to him a threat to his self-image and to his sense of identity. He reacted to this threat with intense aggression, as if it were a threat to his body or his property. The aggression in such cases has one aim: to destroy the witness who has the evidence.

In psychoanalytic therapy one can observe with great regularity that resistance is being built up when repressed material is touched. But we are by no means restricted to the psychoanalytic situation in order to observe this phenomenon. Examples from daily life abound. Who has not seen the mother who reacts with fury when someone tells her that she wants to keep her children close to her because she wants to possess and control them—and not because she loves them so much? Or the father who is told that his concern for his daughter's virginity is motivated by his own sexual interest in her? Or a certain type of patriot who is reminded of the profit interest behind his political convictions? Or a certain type of revolutionary who is reminded of the personal destructive impulses behind his ideology? In fact, questioning another's motive violates one of the most respected taboos of courtesy—and a very necessary one, inasmuch as courtesy has the function of minimizing the arousal of aggression.

Historically, the same thing happens. Those who told the truth about a particular regime have been exiled, jailed, or killed by those in power whose fury had been aroused. To be sure, the obvious explanation is that they were dangerous to their respective establishments, and that killing them seemed the best way to protect the status quo. This is true enough, but it does not explain the fact that the truth-sayers are so deeply hated even when they do not constitute a real threat to the established order. The reason lies, I believe, in that by speaking the truth they mobilize the resistance of those who repress it. To the latter, the truth is dangerous not only because it can threaten their power but because it shakes their whole conscious system of orientation, deprives them of their rationalizations, and might even force them to act differently. Only those who have experienced the process of becoming aware of important impulses that were repressed know the earthquakelike sense of bewilderment and confusion that occurs as a result.

Not all people are willing to risk this adventure, least of all those who profit, at least for the moment, from being blind.

Conformist Aggression

Conformist aggression comprises various acts of aggression that are performed not because the aggressor is driven by the desire to destroy, but because he is told to do so and considers it his duty to obey orders. In all hierarchically structured societies obedience is perhaps the most deeply ingrained trait. Obedience is equated with virtue, disobedience with sin. To be disobedient is the arch crime from which all other crimes follow. Abraham was willing to kill his son out of obedience. Antigone is killed by Creon for her disobedience to the laws of the state. Armies, especially, cultivate obedience, since their very essence is built on an absolute reflexlike acceptance of commands that precludes any questioning. The soldier who kills and maims, the bomber pilot who destroys thousands of lives in one moment, are not necessarily driven by a destructive or cruel impulse, but by the principle of unquestioning obedience.

Conformist aggression is sufficiently widespread to deserve serious attention. From the behavior of boys in a juvenile gang to that of soldiers in an army, many destructive acts are committed in order not to appear "yellow," and out of obedience to orders. It is these motivations, and not human destructiveness, that are the root of this type of aggressive behavior, which is often wrongly interpreted as indicating the power of innate aggressive impulses. Conformist aggression might as well have been classified as pseudoaggression; the reason for not doing so is that obedience as a consequence of the need to conform will in many cases mobilize aggressive impulses that otherwise might not have become manifest. Furthermore, the impulse not to obey or not to conform constitutes for many an inner threat, against which they defend themselves by performing the required aggressive act.

Instrumental Aggression

Another biologically adaptive type of aggression is instrumental aggression, which has the aim of obtaining that which is *necessary* or *desirable.* The aim is not *destruction as such;* this serves only as an

instrument for attaining the real aim. In this respect it is similar to defensive aggression, but in other important aspects it is different. It does not seem to have a phylogenetically programmed neuronal basis such as that which programs defensive aggression; among mammals, only animals of prey, whose aggression is instrumental to obtaining food, are endowed with an innate neuronal pattern that impels them to attack their prey. The hunting behavior of hominids and *Homo* is based on learning and experience, and does not seem to be phylogenetically programmed.

The difficulty with instrumental aggression lies in the ambiguity of the terms “necessary” and “desirable.”

It is easy to define necessary in terms of an unquestionable physiological need, as, for instance, warding off starvation. If a man steals or robs because he and his family do not have even the minimal amount of food they need, the aggression is clearly an act motivated by physiological necessity. The same would hold true for a primitive tribe on the verge of starvation which attacks another tribe that is better off. But these clear-cut examples of necessity are relatively rare today. Other, more complicated cases are much more frequent. The leaders of a nation realize that their economic situation will be seriously endangered in the long run unless they can conquer territory having the raw materials they need, or unless they defeat a competing nation. Although frequently such reasons are merely an ideological cover for the desire for increasing power or the personal ambition of the leaders, there are wars which do respond to a historical necessity, at least in a broad, relative sense.

But what is desirable? In a narrow sense of the word one could answer: *The desirable is what is necessary.* In this instance “desirable” is based on the objective situation. More frequently, however, desirable is defined as *that which is desired.* If we use the term in this sense, the problem of instrumental aggression assumes another aspect, and in fact the most important one in the motivation of aggression. The truth is that people desire not only what is necessary in order to survive, not only that which provides the material basis for a good life; most people in our culture—and in similar periods of history—are *greedy:* greedy for more food, drink, sex, possessions, power, and fame. Their greed may refer more to one than to another of these objects; what all people have in common is that they are insatiable and hence never satisfied. Greed is one of the strongest noninstinctive passions in man, and it is clearly a symptom of physical

dysfunctioning, of inner emptiness and a lack of a center within oneself. It is a pathological manifestation of the failure to develop fully, as well as one of the fundamental sins in Buddhist, Jewish, and Christian ethics.

A few examples will illustrate the pathological character of greed: it is well-known that overeating, which is one form of greed, is frequently caused by states of depression; or that compulsive buying is one attempt to escape from a depressed mood. The act of eating or buying is a symbolic act of filling the inner void and, thus, overcoming the depressed feeling for the moment. Greed is a passion—that is to say, it is charged with energy and relentlessly drives a person toward the attainment of his goals.

In our culture greed is greatly reinforced by all those measures that tend to transform everybody into a consumer. Of course the greedy person does not need to be aggressive, provided he has enough money to buy what he desires. But the greedy person who does not have the necessary means must attack if he wants to satisfy his desires. The most drastic example of this is the drug addict who is possessed by his greed for the drug (although in his case increasingly reinforced by physiological sources). The many who do not have the money to buy drugs, rob, assault, or even kill in order to get the necessary means. Destructive as their behavior is, their aggression is instrumental and not their goal. On a historical scale greed is one of the most frequent causes of aggression and is probably as strong a motive for instrumental aggression as the desire for what is objectively necessary.

The understanding of greed is obscured by its identification with self-interest. The latter is a normal expression of a biologically given drive, that for self-preservation, the aim of which is to obtain what is necessary for the preservation of life or of a customary, traditional standard of living. As Max Weber. Tawney, von Brentano, Sombart, and others have shown, man in the Middle Ages was motivated by the desire to preserve his traditional standard of living, whether as a peasant or as an artisan. The demands of the revolutionary peasants in the sixteenth century were not to have what the artisans in the cities had, nor did the artisans strive for the wealth of a feudal baron or a rich merchant. Even as late as the eighteenth century we find laws that forbid a merchant to try to take customers away from a competitor by making his own store look more attractive or by praising his wares to the disadvantage of those of another merchant. Only with the full development of capitalism—as earlier, in comparable societies like that of the Roman Empire—did greed become a key motive for an ever-increasing

number *of* citizens. However, greed, perhaps because of a still-lingering religious tradition, *is* a motive to which hardly anyone dares to confess. The dilemma was solved by rationalizing greed as self-interest. The logic went: self-interest is a biologically given striving anchored in human nature; self-interest equals greed; ergo: greed is rooted in human nature—and not a character—conditioned human passion. Q.E.D.

On the Causes of War

The most important case of instrumental aggression is *war*. It has become fashionable to consider war as caused by the power of man's destructive instinct. Instinctivists and psychoanalysts[21] have given this explanation of war. Thus, for instance, an important representative of psychoanalytic orthodoxy, E. Glover, argues against M. Ginsberg that "the riddle of war lies … deep in the unconscious," and he compares war with an "inexpedient form of instinct adaptation." (E. Glover and M. Ginsberg, 1934.)[22]

Freud himself took a much more realistic view than his followers. In his famous letter to Albert Einstein, *Why War?* (S. Freud, 1933), he did not take the position that war was *caused* by human destructiveness, but saw its cause in realistic conflicts between groups which always have been solved by violence, since there was no international enforceable law according to which—as in civil law—the conflicts could have been solved peacefully. He attributed only an auxiliary role to the factor of human destructiveness, as facilitating the readiness of people to go to war once the government has decided to wage war.

The thesis that war is caused by innate human destructiveness is plainly absurd for anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of history. The Babylonians, the Greeks,[23] up to the statesmen of our time, have planned war for what they thought were very realistic reasons and weighed the pros and cons very thoroughly, even though, naturally, their calculations were often erroneous. Their motives were manifold: land for cultivation, riches, slaves, raw materials, markets, expansion—and defense. Under special circumstances, a wish for revenge or in a small tribe the passion for destruction has been among the factors that motivated wars, but such cases are atypical. This view that war is caused by man's aggression is not only

unrealistic but harmful. It detracts attention from the real causes and thus weakens the opposition to them.

The thesis about the innate tendency for war is not only repudiated by the historical record but also, and very importantly, by the history of primitive warfare. We have shown earlier in the context of aggression among primitive peoples that they—particularly the hunters and food gatherers—are the least warlike, and that their fighting is characterized by its relative lack of destructiveness and bloodthirstiness. We have furthermore seen that with the growth of civilization the frequency and bloodiness of wars have increased. If war were caused by innate destructive impulses, the reverse would have to be true. The humanitarian tendencies in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries brought about reductions of destructiveness and cruelty in war which were codified—and respected, up to and including the First World War—in various international treaties. From this progressive perspective it seemed that civilized man is less aggressive than primitive man, and the still-existing occurrence of war was explained as caused by stubbornness of the aggressive instincts, which refuse to give in to the beneficial influence of civilization. But, in fact, the destructiveness of civilized man was projected into man's nature, and thus history was confused with biology.

It would far exceed the frame of this volume if I tried to present even a brief analysis of the causes of war, and I have to limit myself to giving only one example, that of the First World War.[24]

The First World War was motivated by the economic interests and ambitions of the political, military, and industrial leaders on both sides, and not by a need of the various nations involved to give vent to their dammed-up aggression. These motivations are well known, and need not be described here in detail. By and large, it can be said that the German aims in the 1914-1918 war were also its main motivations: economic hegemony in Western and Central Europe and territory in the East. (These were, in fact, also the aims of Hitler, whose foreign policy was essentially the continuation of that of the Imperial government.) The aims and motivations of the Western Allies were similar. France wanted Alsace-Lorraine; Russia, the Dardanelles; England, parts of the German colonies, and Italy, at least a small part of the booty. Had it not been for these aims, some of which were stipulated in secret treaties, peace would have been concluded years earlier

and the lives of many millions of people of both sides would have been spared.

Both sides in the First World War had to appeal to the sense of self-defense and freedom. The Germans claimed they were encircled and threatened, and furthermore, that they were fighting for freedom by fighting the czar; their enemies claimed that they were threatened by the aggressive militarism of the German Junkers, and they were fighting for freedom by fighting the Kaiser. To think that this war owed its origin to the wish of the French, the German, the British, and the Russian populations to discharge their aggressiveness is untrue and serves only one function, that of detracting attention from those persons and social conditions responsible for one of the great slaughters in history.

As far as enthusiasm for this war was concerned, one must distinguish between the initial enthusiasm and the motivations of the respective populations to continue fighting. As far as the German side is concerned, one must differentiate two groups in the population. The small group of nationalists—a small minority of the people as a whole—were clamoring for a war of conquest many years before 1914. They consisted mainly of high school teachers, a few university professors, journalists, and politicians, supported by some leaders of the German Navy and by some sectors of heavy industry. Their psychical motivation might be described as a mixture of group narcissism, instrumental aggression and the wish to make a career and to gain power within and through this nationalistic movement. The vast majority of the population showed a good deal of enthusiasm only shortly before and after the outbreak of the war. Here, too, one finds significant differences and reactions among the various social classes; for instance, the intellectuals and the students behaved with more enthusiasm than the working class. (An interesting datum which throws sonic light on this question is that the leader of the German government, the Reichschancellor von Bethman-Hollweg, as the German Foreign Office documents published after the war show, was aware that it would be impossible to win the consent of the Social Democratic Party, the strongest party in the Reichstag, unless he could first declare war on Russia and therefore make the workers feel that they were fighting against autocracy and for freedom.) The whole population was under the systematic suggestive influence of the government and the press in the few days before the outbreak and after the beginning of the war, to convince them that

Germany was to be humiliated and attacked, thus in this way impulses of defensive aggression were mobilized. The population as a whole, however, was not motivated by strong impulses of instrumental aggression, i.e., the wish to conquer foreign territory. This is borne out by the fact that government propaganda even at the beginning of the war either denied any aims of conquest, or later on, when the generals were dictating foreign policy, aims of conquest were described as necessary for the future safety of the German Reich; however, the initial enthusiasm disappeared after a few months, never to return.

It is most remarkable that when Hitler started his attack against Poland and, thus, as a consequence triggered the Second World War, popular enthusiasm for the war was practically nil. The population, in spite of years of heavy militaristic indoctrination, showed very clearly that they were not eager to fight this war. (Hitler even had to stage a phony attack on a Silesian radio station by alleged Polish soldiers—in reality, disguised Nazis—in order to awaken the sense of defense against an attack.)

But although the German population definitely did not want this war (the generals were also reluctant), they went into the war without resistance and fought bravely until the end.

The psychological problem lies here, not in the causation of the war but in the question: What psychological factors make war *possible* even though they do not cause it?

There are a number of relevant factors to consider in answering this question. In the First World War (also, with some modifications, in the Second World War) once it had started, the German (or French, Russian, British) soldiers went on fighting because they felt that losing the war would mean disaster for the whole nation. The individual soldiers were motivated by the feeling that they were fighting for their lives, and that it was a matter of killing or being killed. But even these feelings would not have been sufficient to sustain the willingness to go on. They also knew that they would be shot if they ran away, although even these motivations did not prevent large-scale mutinies from occurring in all armies; in Russia and Germany they led eventually to revolutions in 1917 and 1918. In France there was almost no army corps in 1917 in which the soldiers did not mutiny, and it was only due to the skill of the French generals in preventing one military unit from knowing what went on in other units that these

mutinies were suppressed by a mixture of wholesale executions and some improvements in the conditions in the daily life of the soldiers.

Another important factor for the possibility of war is the deeply ingrained feeling of respect for and awe of authority. The soldier had traditionally been made to feel that to obey his leaders was a moral and religious obligation for the fulfillment of which he should be ready to pay with his life. It took about three to four years of the horror of life in the trenches and growing insight into the fact that they were being used by their leaders for aims of war that had nothing to do with defense, to break down this attitude of obedience, at least in a considerable part of the army and the populations at home.

There are other, more subtle emotional motivations that make war possible and that have nothing to do with aggression. War is exciting, even if it entails risks for one's life and much physical suffering. Considering that the life of the average person is boring, routinized, and lacking in adventure, the readiness to go to war must be understood as a desire to put an end to the boring routine of daily life—and to throw oneself into an adventure, the only adventure, in fact, the average person may expect to have in his life.[25]

War, to some extent, reverses all values. War encourages deep-seated human impulses, such as altruism and solidarity, to be expressed—impulses that are stunted by the principles of egotism and competition that peacetime life engenders in modern man. Class differences, if not absent, disappear to a considerable extent. In war, man is man again, and has a chance to distinguish himself, regardless of privileges that his social status confers upon him as a citizen. To put it in a very accentuated form: war is an indirect rebellion against the injustice, inequality and boredom governing social life in peacetime, and the fact must not be underestimated that while a soldier fights the enemy for his life, he does not have to fight the members of his own group for food, medical care, shelter, clothing: these are all provided in a kind of perversely socialized system. The fact that war has these positive features is a sad comment on our civilization. If civilian life provided the elements of adventurousness, solidarity, equality, and idealism that can be found in war, it may be very difficult, we may conclude, to get people to fight a war. The problem for governments in war is to make use of this rebellion by harnessing it for the purpose of war; simultaneously it must be prevented from becoming a threat to the government by enforcing

strict discipline and the spirit of obedience to the leaders who are depicted as the unselfish, wise, courageous men protecting their people from destruction.[26]

To conclude, major wars in modern times and most wars between the states of antiquity were not caused by dammed-up aggression, but by instrumental aggression of the military and political elites. This has been shown in the data about the difference in the incidence of war from the most primitive to the higher developed cultures. The more primitive a civilization, the less wars do we find. (Q. Wright, 1965.)[27] The same trend can be seen in the fact that the number and intensity of wars has risen with the development of technical civilization; it is highest among the powerful states with a strong government and lowest among primitive man without permanent chieftainship. As shown in the following table, the number of battles engaged in by the principal European powers in modern times shows the same trend. The table reports the number of battles in each century since 1480 (Q. Wright, 1965):

Years	Number of Battles
1480-1499	9
1500-1599	87
1600-1699	239
1700-1799	781
1800-1899	651
1900-1940	892

What those authors who explain that war is caused by man’s innate aggression have done is to consider modern war as normal, assuming that it must be caused by man’s “destructive” nature. They have tried to find the confirmation for this assumption in the data on animals and on our prehistoric ancestors, which have had to be distorted in order to serve this purpose. This position resulted from the unshakable conviction of the superiority of present-day civilization over pretechnical cultures. The logic was: if civilized man is plagued by so many wars and so much destructiveness, how much worse must primitive man have been, who is far

behind in the development toward “progress.” Since destructiveness must not be blamed on our civilization, it must be explained as the result of our instincts. But the facts speak otherwise.

The Conditions for the Reduction of Defensive Aggression

Since defensive aggression is a phylogenetically prepared reaction to threats to vital interests, it is not possible to change its biological basis, although it can be controlled and modified like impulses rooted in other instinctive dispositions. However, the main condition for the reduction of defensive aggression is the decrease of those realistic factors that mobilize it. To outline a program of social changes that would accomplish this is a task that could obviously not be undertaken within the framework of this book.[28] I will restrict myself only to a few remarks.

The main condition is, of course, that neither individuals nor groups are threatened by others. This depends on the existence of material bases that can provide a dignified life for all men and make the domination of one group by another neither possible nor attractive. Such a condition could be realized in the foreseeable future by means of a different system of production, ownership, and consumption than the present one; but to say that this state could be achieved does not, of course, mean that it will be achieved or that it would be easy to achieve. It is, in fact, a task of such staggering difficulty that for this reason alone many people with good intentions prefer not to do anything; they hope to avert a catastrophe by ritualistically singing the praises of progress.

The establishment of a system that guarantees the provision of basic necessities for all means the disappearance of dominant classes. Man will have to cease to live under “zoo” conditions—i.e., his full freedom will have to be restored and all forms of exploitative control will have to disappear. That man is incapable of dispensing with controlling leaders is a myth disproved by all those societies that function well without hierarchies. Such a change would, of course, involve radical political and social changes that would alter all human relations, including the family structure, the structure of education, of religion, and relations between individuals in work and leisure.

As far as defensive aggression is a reaction not to real threats but to alleged threats produced by mass suggestion and brainwashing, the same

fundamental social changes would abolish the basis for the use of this kind of psychic force. Since suggestibility is based on the powerlessness of the individual and on his awe of leaders, the social and political changes just mentioned would lead to its disappearance and, correspondingly, to the development of independent critical thinking.

Finally, in order to reduce group narcissism, the misery, monotony, dullness, and powerlessness that exist in large sectors of the population would have to be eliminated. This cannot be accomplished simply by bettering material conditions. It can only be the result of drastic changes in the social organization to convert it from a control-property-power orientation to a life orientation; from *having* and *hoarding* to *being* and *sharing*. It will require the highest degree of active participation and responsibility on the part of each person in his role as a worker or employee in any kind of enterprise, as well as in his role as a citizen. Entirely new forms of decentralization must be devised, as well as new social and political structures that will put an end to the society of anomie, the mass society consisting of millions of atoms.

None of these conditions are independent from each other. They are part of a system, and hence, reactive aggression can be reduced to a minimum only if the whole system as it has existed during the last sir thousand years of history can be replaced by a fundamentally different one. If this occurs, the visions that were utopian with the Buddha, the Prophets, Jesus, and the humanist utopians of the Renaissance will be recognized as rational and realistic solutions serving the basic biological program of man: the preservation and growth of both the individual and the human species.

[1]This view has been expressed by C. and W. M. S. Russell (1968a).

[2]L. von Bertalanffy has taken a position similar in principle to that presented here. He writes: “There is no doubt about the presence of aggressive and destructive tendencies in the human psyche which are of the nature of biological drives. However, the most pernicious phenomena of aggression, transcending self-preservation and self-destruction, are based upon a characteristic feature of man above the biological level, namely his capability of creating symbolic universes in thought, language and behavior.” (L. von Bertalanffy, 1956.)

[3]Personal communication from the late Dr. D. T. Suzuki.

[4]Cf. F. A. Beach (1945).

[5]These figures are debatable, however, since estimates of the percentage of XYY among the general population vary between 0.5-3.5 per 1,000.

[6]Cf. M. F. A. Montagu (1968) and J. Nielsen (1968), especially the literature quoted there.

[7]The latest survey on this question arrives at the conclusion that the link between aggression and XYY chromosomes is as yet unproven. The author writes: “The preponderant opinion among the Conference participants was that the behavioral aberrations implied or documented thus far do not indicate a direct cause and effect relationship with the XYY chromosome constitution. Thus, it would not be possible to say at the present time that the XYY complement is definitely or invariably associated with behavioral abnormalities… Moreover, the widespread publicity notwithstanding, individuals with the XYY anomaly have not been found to be more aggressive than matched offenders with normal chromosome constitutions. In this respect, it appears that premature and incautious speculations may have led to XYY persons being falsely stigmatized as unusually aggressive and violent compared to other offenders.” (S. A. Shah, 1970.)

[8]Copulation between animals sometimes gives the impression of fierce aggression on the part of the male; observations by trained observers indicate that reality does not correspond to the appearances, and that at least among mammals, the male does not cause the female any harm.

[9]Cf. the discussion of sadism in chapter 11.

[10]It is characteristic for this phenomenon that the Greek word *ethos*—meaning, literally, behavior—has assumed the meaning of the “ethical,” just as “norm” (originally the word for a carpenter’s tool) was used in the double sense of what is “normal” and what is “normative.”

[11]I am indebted to Dr. Juan de Dios Hernández for his stimulating suggestions on the neurophysiological level, which I omit here as they would require a lengthy technical discussion.

[12]The revolutions that have occurred in history must not obscure the fact that infants and children also make revolutions, but since they are powerless, they have to use their own methods, those of guerrilla warfare, as it were. They fight against suppression of their freedom by various individual methods, such as stubborn negativism, refusal to eat, refusal to be toilet trained, bed-wetting, up and on to the more drastic methods of autistic withdrawal and pseudomental debility. The adults behave like any elite whose power is challenged. They use physical force, often blended with bribery, to protect their position. As a result, most children surrender and prefer submission to constant torment. No mercy is shown in this war until victory is achieved, and our hospitals are filled with its casualties. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable fact that all human beings—the children of the powerful

as well as those of the powerless—share the common experience of once having been powerless and of having fought for their freedom. That is why one may assume that every human being—aside from his biological equipment—has acquired in his childhood a revolutionary potential that, though dormant for a long time, might be mobilized under special circumstances.

[13]Not only of man. The deteriorating effect on the animal of life in the zoo has been mentioned before and seems to outweigh the contrary views of even as great an authority as Hediger. (H. Hediger, 1942.)

[14]Skin color has this effect only if it is combined with powerlessness. The Japanese have become persons since they acquired power at the beginning of this century; the image of the Chinese changed for the same reason only a few years ago. The possession of advanced technology has become the criterion of being human.

[15]For a more detailed discussion of narcissism, see E. Fromm (1964a).

[16]In recent years many analysts have questioned the concept of primary narcissism in infancy and assume the existence of object relations at a much earlier period than Freud did. Freud's idea of the totally narcissistic nature of psychoses has also been abandoned by most psychoanalysts.

[17]In the following I deal only with narcissism that manifests itself in the sense of grandiosity. There is another form of narcissism that, although it seems to be the opposite, is only another manifestation of the same thing; I refer to negative narcissism, in which a person is constantly and anxiously concerned with his health to the point of hypochondria. This manifestation is of no importance in this context. It should be noted, however, that the two manifestations are often blended; we need only think of Himmler's hypochondriacal preoccupation with his health.

[18]The problem of narcissism and creativity is a very complex one and would need a much longer discussion than is possible here.

[19]That does not mean that he is nothing but bluff; this is true frequently enough, but not always. Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill, for instance, were very narcissistic persons, yet they did not lack in important political achievements. But these achievements were not such as to justify their feeling of self-assurance and unquestionable rightness often manifested in arrogance; at the same time, their narcissism was limited in comparison with that of a man like Hitler. That explains why Churchill did not suffer from severe mental consequences when he lost the 1948 election, and I assume the same would have been the case with Roosevelt if he had experienced defeat, although the fact must not be ignored that even after political defeat they would have retained

a great number of admirers. Wilson's case may be somewhat different; it would be a subject for study whether his political defeat did not create serious psychic problems that interacted with his physical illness. With Hitler and Stalin the case seems to be clear. Hitler preferred to die rather than to face defeat. Stalin showed signs of a psychic crisis during the first weeks after the German attack in 1941, and it seems likely that he suffered from paranoid tendencies in the last years of his life after he had created so many enemies that he may have sensed he was no longer the beloved father of his subjects.

[20]Sometimes the consensus even of a small group suffices to create reality—in the most extreme cases even the consensus of two *(folie à deux)*.

[21]See A. Strachey (1957); see also E. F. M. Durbin and J. Bowlby (1939) who, in contrast, reason with great skill that peaceful cooperation is as natural and fundamental a tendency in human relations as fighting, yet consider war essentially a psychological problem.

[22]At the time of revising this part of the manuscript reports from the 27th Congress of the International Psychoanalytic Association, 1971, held in Vienna, seem to indicate a change in attitude in the matter of war. Dr. A. Mitscherlich said that "all of our theories are going to be carried away by history" unless psychoanalysis is applied to social problems, and furthermore, "I fear that nobody is going to take us very seriously if we continue to suggest that war comes about because fathers hate their sons and want to kill them, that war is filicide. We must, instead, aim at finding a theory that explains group behavior, a theory that traces this behavior to the conflicts in society that actuate the individual drives." Such attempts have indeed been made by psychoanalysts since the early thirties, but have led to their expulsion from the International Psychoanalytic Association under one pretext or another. Official permission for this new "endeavor" was given by Anna Freud at the end of the Congress, adding cautiously, "We should let a formulation of a theory of aggression wait until we know much more from our clinical studies about what really constitutes aggressivity." (Both quotations are from the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune*, July 29, 31, 1971.)

[23]For a very telling example see Thucydides' description of the Peloponnesian war.

[24]The literature on the military, political, and economic aspect of the 1914-1918 war is so large that even an abbreviated bibliography would fill many pages. I find that the two most profound and enlightening works on the causes of World War I are those by two outstanding historians: G. W. F. Hallgarten (1963) and F. Fischer (1967).

[25]But one must not overestimate this factor. The example of countries like Switzerland, the Scandinavian nations, Belgium, and the Netherlands demonstrates that the factor of adventurousness

cannot cause a population to want war if the country is not attacked and if there is no reason for the governments to start war.

[26]It is characteristic for this dilemma that in the international treaties governing the treatment of war prisoners, all powers agreed on the stipulation that forbids a government to propagandize “their” prisoners of war against their respective governments. In short, one has agreed that each government has a right to kill the soldiers of the enemy, but it must not make them disloyal.

[27]Cf. “Primitive Warfare” in chapter 8.

[28]I have discussed some of these problems in *The Sane Society* (1955a) and in *The Revolution of Hope* (1968a).

10. Malignant Aggression: Premises

Preliminary Remarks

BIOLOGICALLY ADAPTIVE aggression serves life. This is understood in principle, biologically and neurophysiologically, even though much more information is still needed. It is a drive man shares with all other animals, although with certain differences that have been discussed above.

What is unique in man is that he can be driven by impulses to kill and to torture, and that he feels lust in doing so; he is the only animal that can be a killer and destroyer of his own species without any rational gain, either biological or economic. To explore the nature of this biologically nonadaptive, malignant destructiveness is the object of the following pages.

Malignant aggression, let us remember, is specifically human and not derived from animal instinct. It does not serve the physiological survival of man, yet it is an important part of his mental functioning. It is one of the passions that are dominant and powerful in some individuals and cultures, although not in others. I shall try to show that destructiveness is one of the possible answers to psychic needs that are rooted in the existence of man, and that its generation results, as was stated earlier, from *the interaction of various social conditions with man's existential needs.* This hypothesis makes it necessary to build a theoretical basis upon which we can attempt to examine the following questions: What are the specific conditions of human existence? What is man's nature or essence?

Although present-day thought, especially in psychology, is not very hospitable to such questions, which are usually considered as belonging to the realm of philosophy and other purely "subjective speculations," I hope to demonstrate in the following discussion that there are indeed areas for empirical examination.

Man's Nature

For most thinkers since the Greek philosophers, it was self-evident that there is something called human nature, something that constitutes the essence of man. There were various views about what constitutes it, but there was agreement that such an essence exists—that is to say, that there is something by virtue of which man is man. Thus man was defined as a rational being, as a social animal, an animal that can make tools *(Homo faber)*, or a symbol-making animal.

More recently, this traditional view has begun to be questioned. One reason for this change was the increasing emphasis given to the historical approach to man. An examination of the history of humanity suggested that man in our epoch is so different from man in previous times that it seemed unrealistic to assume that men in every age have had in common something that can be called "human nature." The historical approach was reinforced, particularly in the United States, by studies in the field of cultural anthropology. The study of primitive peoples has discovered such a diversity of customs, values, feelings, and thoughts that many anthropologists arrived at the concept that man is born as a blank sheet of paper on which each culture writes its text. Another factor contributing to the tendency to deny the assumption of a fixed human nature was that the concept has so often been abused as a shield behind which the most inhuman acts are committed. In the name of human nature, for example, Aristotle and most thinkers up to the eighteenth century defended slavery.[1] Or in order to prove the rationality and necessity of the capitalist form of society, scholars have tried to make a case for acquisitiveness, competitiveness, and selfishness as innate human traits. Popularly, one refers cynically to "human nature" in accepting the inevitability of such undesirable human behavior as greed, murder, cheating, and lying.

Another reason for skepticism about the concept of human nature probably lies in the influence of evolutionary thinking. Once man came to be seen as developing in the process of evolution, the idea of a substance which is contained in his essence seemed untenable. Yet I believe it is precisely from an evolutionary standpoint that we can expect new insight into the problem of the nature of man. New contributions have been made in this direction by such authors as Karl Marx, R. M. Bucke,[2] Teilhard de Chardin, T. Dobzhansky; a similar approach is proposed also in this chapter.

The main argument in favor of the assumption of the existence of a human nature is that we can define the essence of *Homo sapiens* in

morphological, anatomical, physiological, and neurological terms. In fact we give an exact and generally accepted definition of the species man by data referring to posture, formation of the brain, the teeth, diet, and many other factors by which we clearly differentiate him from the most developed nonhuman primates. Surely we must assume, unless we regress to a view that considers body and mind as separate realms, that the species man must be definable mentally as well as physically.

Darwin himself was very aware of the fact that man qua man was characterized not only by specific physical but also by specific psychical attributes. The most important ones he mentions in *The Descent of Man* are as follows (abbreviated and paraphrased by G. G. Simpson):

> In proportion with his higher intelligence, man's behavior is more flexible, less reflex or instinctive.
>
> Man shares such complex factors as curiosity, imitation, attention, memory, and imagination with other relatively advanced animals, but has them in higher degree and applies them in more intricate ways.
>
> More, at least, than other animals, man reasons and improves the adaptive nature of his behavior in rational ways.
>
> Man regularly both uses and makes tools in great variety.
>
> Man is self-conscious; he reflects on his past, future, life, death, and so forth.
>
> Man makes mental abstractions and develops a related symbolism; the most essential and complexly developed outcome of these capacities is language.
>
> Some men have a sense of beauty.
>
> Most men have a religious sense, taking that term broadly to include awe, superstition, belief in the animistic, supernatural, or spiritual.
>
> Normal men have a moral sense: in later terms, man ethicizes.
>
> Man is a cultural and social animal and has developed cultures and societies unique in kind and in complexity. (G. G. Simpson, 1949.)

If one examines Darwin's list of psychic traits, several elements stand out. He mentions a number of disparate single items, some uniquely human, such as self-consciousness, symbol and culture making, an aesthetic, moral, and religious sense. This list of specific human characteristics suffers from

the fact that it is purely descriptive and enumerative, is unsystematic, and makes no attempt to analyze their common conditions.

He does not mention in his list specifically human passions and emotions like tenderness, love, hate, cruelty, narcissism, sadism, masochism, and so on. Others he treats as instincts. For him, all men and animals,

> especially the primates, have some few instincts in common. All have the same senses, intuitions, and sensations, similar passions, affections, and emotions, even the more complex ones, such as jealousy, suspicion, emulation, gratitude, and magnanimity: they practice deceit and are revengeful; they are sometimes susceptible to ridicule, and even have a sense of humor; they feel wonder and curiosity: they possess the same faculties of imitation, the association of ideas, and reason though in very different degrees. (C. Darwin, 1946.)

Clearly, our attempt to consider the most important human passions as specifically human, and not as inherited from our animal ancestors, can find no support in Darwin's view.

The advance of thought among students of evolution since Darwin is manifest in the views of one of the most eminent contemporary investigators, G. G. Simpson. He insists that man has essential attributes other than those of animals. "It is important to realize," he writes, "that man is an animal but it is even more important to realize that the essence of his unique nature lies precisely in those characteristics that are not shared with any other animal. His place in nature and its supreme significance are not defined by his animality but by his humanity." (G. G. Simpson, 1949.)

Simpson suggests as the basic definition of *Homo sapiens* the interrelated factors of intelligence, flexibility, individualization, and socialization. Even if his answer is not entirely satisfactory, his attempt to understand man's essential traits as being- interrelated and rooted in one basic factor and his recognition of the transformation of quantitative into qualitative change constitute a significant step beyond Darwin. (G. G. Simpson, 1944; 1953.)

From the side of psychology, one of the best-known attempts to describe man's specific needs is that made by Abraham Maslow, who drew up a list of man's "basic needs"—physiological and aesthetic needs, needs

for safety, belongingness, love, esteem, self-actualization, knowledge and understanding. (A. Maslow, 1954.) This list is a somewhat unsystematic enumeration, and regrettably, Maslow did not try to analyze the common origin of such needs in the nature of man.

The attempt to define the nature of man in terms of the specific conditions—biological and mental—of the species man leads us first to some considerations concerning the birth of man.

It seems simple to know when a human individual comes into existence, but in fact it is not quite as simple as it seems. The answer might be: at the time of conception, when the fetus has assumed definite human form, in the act of birth, at the end of weaning; or one might even claim that most men have not yet been fully born by the time they die. We would best decline to fix a day or an hour for "the birth" of an individual, and speak rather of a *process* in the course of which a person comes into existence.

If we ask when man *as a species* was born, the answer is much more difficult. We know much less about the evolutionary process. Here we are dealing with millions of years; our knowledge is based on accidental findings of skeletons and tools whose significance is still much disputed.

Yet in spite of the insufficiency of our knowledge, there are a few data which, even though in need of modification in detail, give us a general picture of the process we may call the birth of man. We could date the *conception* of man back at the beginning of unicellular life, about one and a half billion years ago, or to the beginning of the existence of primitive mammals, about two hundred million years ago; we might say that human development begins with man's hominid ancestors who may have lived about fourteen million years ago or possibly earlier. We could date his *birth* from the appearance of the first man, *Homo erectus,* of whom the various specimens found in Asia cover a time from about one million to about five hundred thousand years ago (Peking Man); or from only about forty thousand years ago when modern man *(Homo sapiens sapiens)* emerged, who was in all essential biological aspects identical to man today.[3] Indeed, if we look at man's development in terms of historical time, we might say that man proper was born only a few minutes ago. Or we might even think that he is still in the process of birth, that the umbilical cord has not yet been severed, and that complications have arisen that make it appear doubtful whether man will ever be born or whether he is to be stillborn.

Most students of human evolution date the birth of man to one particular event: *the making of tools,* following Benjamin Franklin's definition of man as *Homo faber,* man the toolmaker. This definition has been sharply criticized by Marx who considered it "characteristic of Yankeedom."[4] Among modern writers, Mumford has most convincingly criticized this orientation based on toolmaking. (L. Mumford, 1967.)

One must look for a concept of man's nature in the process of human evolution rather than in isolated aspects like toolmaking, which bears so clearly the stamp of the contemporary obsession with production. We have to arrive at *an understanding of man's nature on the basis of the blend of the two fundamental biological conditions that mark the emergence of man.* One was *the ever-decreasing determination of behavior by instincts*.[5] Even taking into account the many controversial views about the nature of instincts, it is generally accepted that the higher an animal has risen in the stages of evolution, the less is the weight of stereotyped behavior patterns that are strictly determined and phylogenetically programmed in the brain.

The process of ever-decreasing determination of behavior by instincts can be plotted as a continuum, at the zero end of which we will find the lowest forms of animal evolution with the highest degree of instinctive determination; this decreases along with animal evolution and reaches a certain level with the mammals; it decreases further in the development going up to the primates, and even here we find a great gulf between monkeys and apes, as Yerkes and Yerkes have shown in their classic investigation. (R. M. and A. V. Yerkes 1929.) In the species *Homo* instinctive determination has reached its maximum decrease.

The other trend to be found in animal evolution is *the growth of the brain, and particularly of the neocortex.* Here, too, we can plot the evolution as a continuum—at one end, the lowest animals, with the most primitive nervous structure and a relatively small number of neurons; at the other, man, with a larger and more complex brain structure, especially a neocortex three times as large as that of even his hominid ancestors, and a truly fantastic number of interneuronal connections.[6]

Considering these data, man can be defined as the primate that emerged at the point of evolution where instinctive determination had reached a minimum and the development of *the brain a maximum.* This combination of minimal instinctive determination and maximal brain

development had never occurred before in animal evolution and constitutes, biologically speaking, a completely new phenomenon.

When man emerged, his behavior was little guided by his instinctive equipment. Aside from some elementary reactions, such as those to danger or to sexual stimuli, there is no inherited program that tells him how to decide in most instances in which his life may depend on a correct decision. It would thus seem that, biologically, man is the most helpless and frail of all animals.

Does the extraordinary development of his brain make up for his instinctive deficit?

To some extent it does. Man is guided by his intellect to make right choices. But we know also how weak and unreliable this instrument is. It is easily influenced by man's desires and passions and surrenders to their influence. Van's brain is insufficient not only as a substitute for the weakened instincts, but it complicates the task of living tremendously. By this I do not refer to *instrumental intelligence,* the use of thought as an instrument for the manipulation of objects in order to satisfy one's needs; after all, man shares this with animals, especially with the primates. I refer to that aspect in which man's thinking has acquired an entirely new quality, that of *self-awareness.* Man is the only animal who not only knows objects but who knows that he knows. Man is the only animal who has not only instrumental intelligence, but reason, the capacity to use his thinking to *understand* objectively—i.e., to know the nature of things as they are in themselves, and not only as means for his satisfaction. Gifted with self-awareness and reason, man is aware of himself as a being separate from nature and from others; he is aware of his powerlessness, of his ignorance; he is aware of his end: death.

Self-awareness, reason, and imagination have disrupted the "harmony" that characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, the freak of the universe. He is part of nature, subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends nature. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures. Cast into this world at an accidental place and time, he is forced out of it accidentally and against his will. Being aware of himself, he realizes his powerlessness and the limitations of his existence. He is never free from the dichotomy of his existence: he cannot rid himself of his mind,

even if he would want to; he cannot rid himself of his body as long as he is alive—and his body makes him want to be alive.

Man's life cannot be lived by repeating the pattern of his species; *he* must live. Man is the only animal who does not feel at home in nature, who can feel evicted from paradise, the only animal for whom his own existence is a problem that he has to solve and from which he cannot escape. He cannot go back to the prehuman state of harmony with nature, and he does not know where he will arrive if he goes forward. Man's existential contradiction results in a state of constant disequilibrium. This disequilibrium distinguishes him from the animal, which lives, as it were, in harmony with nature. This does not mean, of course, that the animal necessarily lives a peaceful and happy life, but that it has its specific ecological niche to which its physical and mental qualities have been adapted by the process of evolution. Man's existential, and hence unavoidable disequilibrium can be relatively stable when he has found, with the support of his culture, a more or less adequate way of coping with his existential problems. But this relative stability does not imply that the dichotomy has disappeared; it is merely dormant and becomes manifest as soon as the conditions for this relative stability change.

Indeed, in the process of man's self-creation this relative stability is upset again and again. Man, in his history, changes his environment, and in this process he changes himself. His knowledge increases, but so does his awareness of his ignorance; he experiences himself as an individual, and not only as a member of his tribe, and with this his sense of separateness and isolation grows. He creates larger and more efficient social units, led by powerful leaders—and he becomes frightened and submissive. He attains a certain amount of freedom—and becomes afraid of this very freedom. His capacity for material production grows, but in the process he becomes greedy and egotistical, a slave of the things he has created.

Every new state of disequilibrium forces man to seek for new equilibrium. Indeed, what has often been considered man's innate drive for progress is his attempt to find a new and if possible better equilibrium.

The new forms of equilibrium by no means constitute a straight line of human improvement. Frequently in history new achievements have led to regressive developments. Many times, when forced to find a new solution, man runs into a blind alley from which he has to extricate himself; and it is indeed remarkable that thus far in history he has been able to do so.

These considerations suggest a hypothesis as to how to define the essence or nature of man. I propose that man's nature cannot be defined in terms of a specific quality, such as love, hate, reason, good or evil, but only in terms of fundamental *contradictions* that characterize human existence and have their root in the biological dichotomy between missing instincts and self-awareness. Man's existential conflict produces certain psychic needs common to all men. He is forced to overcome the horror of separateness, of powerlessness, and of lostness, and find new forms of relating himself to the world to enable him to feel at home. I have called these psychic needs existential because they are rooted in the very conditions of human existence. They are shared by all men, and their fulfillment is as necessary for man's remaining sane as the fulfillment of organic drives is necessary for his remaining alive. But each of these needs can be satisfied in different ways, which vary according to the differences of his social condition. These different ways of satisfying the existential needs manifest themselves in passions, such as love, tenderness, striving for justice, independence, truth, hate, sadism, masochism, destructiveness, narcissism. I call them character-rooted passions—or simply human passions—because they are integrated in man's *character.*

While the concept of character will be discussed at length further on, it will suffice here to say that *character is the relatively permanent system of all noninstinctual strivings through which man relates himself to the human and natural world.* One may understand character as the human substitute for the missing animal instincts; it is man's *second nature*. What all men have in common are their organic drives (even though highly modifiable by experience) and their existential needs. What they do not have in common are the kinds of passions that are dominant in their respective characters character-rooted passions. The difference in character is largely due to the difference in social conditions (although genetically given dispositions also influence the formation of the character); for this reason one can call character-rooted passions a historical category and instincts a natural category. Yet the former are not a purely historical category either, inasmuch as the social influence can only work through the biologically given conditions of human existence.[7]

We are now ready to discuss man's existential needs and the variety of character-rooted passions that in turn constitute different answers to these existential needs. Before starting this discussion let us look back and raise a

question of method. I have suggested a “reconstruction” of man’s mind as it may have been at the beginning of prehistory. The obvious objection to this method is that it is a theoretical reconstruction for which there is no evidence whatsoever—or so it would appear. However, evidence is not completely lacking for the formulation of some tentative hypotheses that may be disproven or confirmed by further findings.

This evidence lies essentially in those findings which indicate that man, perhaps as early as half a million years ago (Peking Man) had cults and rituals, manifesting that his concerns went beyond satisfying his material needs. The history of prehistoric religion and art (not separable in those times) is the main source for the study of primitive man’s mind. Obviously. I cannot set forth into this vast and as vet controversial territory within the context of this study. What I want to stress is that the presently available data, as well as those still to be found in regard to primitive religions and rituals, will not reveal the nature of prehistoric man’s minds unless we have a key with which we can decipher it. This key, I believe, is our own mind. Not our conscious thoughts, but those categories of thought and feeling that are buried in our unconscious and yet are an experiential core present in all men of all cultures: briefly, it is what I would like to call man’s “primary human experience.” This primary human experience is in itself rooted in man’s existential situation. For this reason it is common to all men and does not need to be explained as being racially inherited.

The first question, of course, is whether we can find this key; whether we can transcend our normal frame of mind and transpose ourselves into the mind of the “original man.” Drama, poetry, art, myth have done this, but not psychology, with the exception of psychoanalysis. The various psychoanalytic schools have done it in different ways; Freud’s original man was a historical construct of the member of a patriarchally organized male band, ruled and exploited by a father-tyrant against whom the sons rebel, and whose internalization is the basis for the formation of the superego and a new social organization. Freud’s aim was to help the contemporary patient to discover his own unconscious by letting him share the experience of what Freud believed to be his earliest ancestors.

Even though this model of original man was fictitious and the corresponding “Oedipus complex” was not the deepest level of human experience, Freud’s hypothesis opened up an entirely new possibility: that all men of every period and culture had shared a basic experience with their

common ancestors. Thus Freud added another historical argument to the humanist belief that all men share the common core of humanity.

C. G. Jung made the same attempt in a different and in many respects more sophisticated way than Freud's. He was particularly interested in the variety of myths, rituals, and religions. He used myth ingeniously and brilliantly as a key for the understanding of the unconscious, and thus built a bridge between mythology and psychology more systematically and extensively than any of his predecessors.

What I am suggesting here is not only to use the past for the understanding of the present, of our unconscious, but also to use our unconscious as a key to the understanding of prehistory. This requires the practice of self-knowledge in the psychoanalytical sense: the removal of a major part of our resistance against the awareness of our unconscious, thus reducing the difficulty of penetrating from our conscious mind to the depth of our core.

Provided we are able to do this, we can understand our fellowmen who live in the same culture as we do, also men of an entirely different culture, and even a mad man. We can also sense what original man must have experienced, what existential needs he had, and in what ways men (including ourselves) can respond to these needs.

When we see primitive art, down to the cave paintings of thirty thousand years ago, or the art of radically different cultures like the African or Greek or that of the Middle Ages, we take it for granted that we understand them, in spite of the fact that these cultures were radically different from ours. We dream symbols and myths that are like those men thousands of years ago conceived when they were awake. Are they not a common language of all humanity, regardless of vast differences in conscious perception? (E. Fromm, 1951a.)

Considering that contemporary thinking in the field of human evolution is so one-sidedly oriented along the lines of man's bodily development and his material culture, of which skeletons and tools are the main witnesses, it is not surprising that few investigators are interested in the mind of early man. Yet the view I have presented here is shared by a number of outstanding scholars, whose whole philosophical outlook differs from that of the majority; I am referring especially to the views, particularly close to my own, of the paleontologist F. M. Bergounioux and the zoologist and geneticist T. Dobzhansky.

Bergounioux writes:

> Even though he [man] can legitimately be considered a primate, of which he possesses all the anatomical and physiological characteristics, he alone forms a biological group whose originality none will dispute… Man felt himself brutally torn from his environment and isolated in the middle of a world whose measure and laws he did not know; he therefore felt obliged to learn, by constant bitter effort and his own mistakes, everything he had to know to survive. The animals surrounding him came gathering, searching for water, doubling or fleeing to defend themselves against innumerable enemies; for them, periods of rest and activity succeed each other in an unchanging rhythm fixed by the needs for food or sleep, reproduction or protection. Man detaches himself from his surroundings; he feels alone, abandoned, ignorant of everything except that he knows nothing… His first feeling thus was existential anxiety, which may even have taken him to the limits of despair. (F. M. Bergounioux, 1964.)

A very similar view was expressed by Dobzhansky:

> Self-awareness and foresight brought, however, the awesome gifts of freedom and responsibility. Man feels free to execute some of his plans and to leave others in abeyance. He feels the joy of being the master, rather than a slave, of the world and of himself. But the joy is tempered by a feeling of responsibility. Man knows that he is accountable for his acts: he has acquired the knowledge of good and evil. This is a dreadfully heavy load to carry. No other animal has to withstand anything like it. There is a tragic discord in the soul of man. Among the flaws in human nature, this one is far more serious than the pain of childbirth. (T. Dobzhansky, 1962.)

The Existential Needs of Man and the Various Character-Rooted Passions[8]

A Frame of Orientation and Devotion

Man's capacity for self-awareness, reason, and imagination—new qualities that go beyond the capacity for instrumental thinking of even the cleverest animals—requires a picture of the world and of his place in it that is structured and has inner cohesion. Man needs a map of his natural and social world, without which he would be confused and unable to act purposefully and consistently. He would have no way of orienting himself and of finding for himself a fixed point that permits him to organize all the impressions that impinge upon him. Whether he believed in sorcery and magic as final explanations of all events, or in the spirit of his ancestors as guiding his life and fate, or in an omnipotent god who will reward or punish him, or in the power of science to give answers to all human problems—from the standpoint of his need for a frame of orientation, it does not make any difference. His world makes sense to him, and he feels certain about his ideas through the consensus with those around him. Even if the map is wrong, it fulfills its psychological function. But the map was never entirely wrong—nor has it ever been entirely right, either. It has always been enough of an approximation to the explanation of phenomena to serve the purpose of living. Only to the degree to which the *practice* of life is freed from its contradictions and its irrationality can the theoretical picture correspond to the truth.

The impressive fact is that we do not find any culture in which there does not exist such a frame of orientation. Or any individual either. Often an individual may disclaim having any such overall picture and believe that he responds to the various phenomena and incidents of life from case to case, as his judgment guides him. But it can be easily demonstrated that he takes his own philosophy for granted, because to him it is only common sense, and he is unaware that all his concepts rest upon a commonly accepted frame of reference. When such a person is confronted with a fundamentally different total view of life he judges it as "crazy" or "irrational" or "childish," while he considers himself as being only logical. The need for the formation of a frame of reference is particularly clear in the case of children. They show, at a certain age, a deep need for a frame of orientation and often make it up themselves in an ingenious way, using the few data available to them.

The intensity of the need for a frame of orientation explains a fact that has puzzled many students of man, namely the ease with which people fall under the spell of irrational doctrines, either political or religions or of any

other nature, when to the one who is not under their influence it seems obvious that they are worthless constructs. Part of the answer lies in the suggestive influence of leaders and in the suggestibility of man. But this does not seem to be the whole story. Man would probably not be so suggestive were it not that his need for a cohesive frame of orientation is so vital. The more an ideology pretends to give answers to all questions, the more attractive it is; here may lie the reason why irrational or even plainly insane thought systems can so easily attract the minds of men.

But a map is not enough as a guide for action; man also needs a goal that tells him where to go. The animal has no such problems. Its instincts provide it with a map as well as with goals. But man, lacking instinctive determination and having a brain that permits him to think of many directions in which he could go, needs an object of total devotion; he needs an object of devotion to be the focal point of all his strivings and the basis for all his effective—and not only proclaimed—values. He needs such an object of devotion for a number of reasons. The object integrates his energies in one direction. It elevates him beyond his isolated existence, with all its doubts and insecurity, and gives meaning to life. In being devoted to a goal beyond his isolated ego, he transcends himself and leaves the prison of absolute egocentricity.[9]

The objects of man's devotion vary. He can be devoted to an idol which requires him to kill his children or to an ideal that makes him protect children; he can be devoted to the growth of life or to its destruction. He can be devoted to the goal of amassing a fortune, of acquiring power, of destruction, or to that of loving and of being productive and courageous. He can be devoted to the most diverse goals and idols; yet while the difference in the objects of devotion are of immense importance, the need for devotion itself is a primary, existential need demanding fulfillment regardless of how this need is fulfilled.

Rootedness

When the infant is born he leaves the security of the womb, the situation in which he was still part of nature—where he lived through his mother's body. At the moment of birth he is still symbiotically attached to mother, and even after birth he remains so longer than most other animals. But even when the umbilical cord is cut there remains a deep craving to

undo the separation, to return to the womb or to find a new situation of absolute protection and security.[10]

But the way to paradise is blocked by man's biological, and particularly by his neurophysiological constitution. He has only one alternative: either to persist in his craving to regress, and to pay for it by symbolic dependence on mother (and on symbolic substitutes, such as soil, nature, god, the nation, a bureaucracy), or to progress and find new roots in the world by his own efforts, by experiencing the brotherhood of man, and by freeing himself from the power of the past.

Man, aware of his separateness, needs to find new ties with his fellowman; his very sanity depends on it. Without strong affective ties to the world, he would suffer from utter isolation and lostness. But he can relate himself to others in different and ascertainable ways. He can love others, which requires the presence of independence and productiveness, or if his sense of freedom is not developed, he can relate to others symbiotically—i.e., by becoming part of them or by making them part of himself. In this symbiotic relationship he strives either to control others (sadism), or to be controlled by them (masochism). If he cannot choose either the way of love or that of symbiosis, he can solve the problem by relating exclusively to himself (narcissism); then he becomes the world, and loves the world by "loving" himself. This is a frequent form of dealing with the need for relatedness (usually blended with sadism), but it is a dangerous one; in its extreme form it leads to some forms of madness. A last and malignant form of solving the problem (usually blended with extreme narcissism) is the craving to destroy all others. If no one exists outside of me, I need not fear others, nor need I relate myself to them. By destroying the world I am saved from being crushed by it.

Unity

The existential split in man would be unbearable could he not establish a sense of unity within himself and with the natural and human world outside. But there are many ways of reestablishing unity.

Man can anaesthetize his consciousness by inducing states of trance or ecstasy, mediated by such means as drugs, sexual orgies, fasting, dancing, and other rituals that abound in various cults. He can also try to identify himself with the animal in order to regain the lost harmony: this form of

seeking unity is the essence of the many primitive religions in which the ancestor of the tribe is a totem animal, or in which man identifies with the animal by acting like one (for instance the Teutonic *berserkers* who identified themselves with a bear) or by wearing an animal mask. Unity can also be established by subordinating all energies to one all-consuming passion, such as the passion for destruction, power, fame, or property.

"To forget oneself," in the sense of anaesthetizing one's reason, is the aim of all these attempts to restore unity within oneself. It is a tragic attempt, in the sense that either it succeeds only momentarily (as in a trance or in drunkenness) or, even if it is permanent (as in the passion for hate or power), it cripples man, estranges him from others, twists his judgment, and makes him as dependent on this particular passion as another is on hard drugs.

There is only one approach to unity that can be successful without crippling man. Such an attempt was made in the first millennium A. C. in all parts of the world where man had developed a civilization—in China, in India, in Egypt, in Palestine, in Greece. The great religions springing from the soil of these cultures taught that man can achieve unity not by a tragic effort to undo the fact of the split, by eliminating reason, but by fully developing human reason and love. Great as are the differences between Taoism, Buddhism, prophetic Judaism, and the Christianity of the Gospels, these religions had one common goal: to arrive at the experience of oneness, not by regressing to animal existence but by becoming fully human—oneness within man, oneness between man and nature, and oneness between man and other men. In the short historical time of twenty-five hundred years man does not seem to have made much progress in achieving the goal that was postulated by these religions. The inevitable slowness of man's economic and social development plus the fact that the religions were co-opted by those whose social function it was to rule and manipulate men seem to account for this. Yet the new concept of unity was as revolutionary an event in man's psychical development as the invention of agriculture and industry was for his economic development. Nor was this concept ever totally lost; it was brought to life in the Christian sects, among the mystics of all religions, in the ideas of Joachim de Fiore, among the Renaissance humanists, and in a secular form in the philosophy of Marx.

The alternative between regressive and progressive ways of achieving salvation is not only a social-historical one. Each individual is confronted

with the same alternative; his margin of freedom not to choose the regressive solution in a society that has chosen it is indeed small—yet it exists. But great effort, clear thinking, and guidance by the teachings of the great humanists is necessary. (Neurosis can be understood best as the battle between two tendencies within an individual; deep character analysis leads, if successful, to the progressive solution.)

Another solution to man's existential split problem is quite characteristic of contemporary cybernetic society: to be identified with one's social role; to feel little, to lose oneself by reducing oneself to a thing; the existential split is camouflaged because man becomes identified with his social organization and forgets that he is a person; he becomes, to use Heidegger's term, a "one," a nonperson. He is, we might say, in a "negative ecstasis"; he forgets himself by ceasing to be "he," by ceasing to be a person and becoming a thing.

Effectiveness

Man's awareness of himself as being in a strange and overpowering world, and his consequent sense of impotence could easily overwhelm him. If he experienced himself as entirely passive, a mere object, he would lack a sense of his own will, of his identity. To compensate for this he must acquire a sense of being able to do something, to move somebody, to "make a dent," or, to use the most adequate English word, to be "effective." We use the word today in referring to an "effective" speaker or salesman, meaning one who succeeds in getting results. But this is a deterioration of the original meaning of "to effect" (from the Latin *ex-facere*, to do). To effect is the equivalent of: to bring to pass, to accomplish, to realize, to carry out, to fulfill; an effective person is one who has the capacity to do, to effect, to accomplish something. To be able to effect something is the assertion that one is not impotent, but that one is an alive, functioning, human being. To be able to effect means to be active and not only *to be affected;* to be active and not only passive. It is, in the last analysis, *the proof that one is.* The principle can be formulated thus: *I am, because I effect.*

A number of investigations have stressed this point. At the beginning of this century K. Groos, the classic interpreter of play, wrote that an essential motive in the child's play was the "joy in being a cause"; this was

his explanation of the child's pleasure in making a clatter, moving things around, playing in puddles, and similar activities. His conclusion was: "We demand a knowledge of the effects and to be ourselves the producers of these effects." (K. Groos, 1901). A similar idea was expressed fifty years later by J. Piaget who observed the child's special interest in objects that he effects by his own movements. (J. Piaget, 1952.) R. W. White used a similar concept in describing one of the basic motivations in man as "competence motivation," and proposed the word "effectance" for the motivational aspect of competence. (R. W. White, 1959.)

The same need is manifested in the fact that the first real sentence of some children from about the age of fifteen to eighteen months is some version of "I do—I do," repeated, and that also for the first time "me" is often used before "mine." (D. E. Schecter, 1968.)[11] Due to his biological situation the child is necessarily in a state of extraordinary helplessness up to the age of eighteen months, and even later he is largely dependent on the favors and goodwill of others. The degree of the child's natural powerlessness changes every day, while in general adults are much slower in changing their attitude toward the child. The child's tantrums, his crying, his stubbornness, the different ways in which he tries to battle adults, are among the most visible manifestations of his attempt to have an effect, to move, to change, to express his will. The child is usually defeated by the superior strength of the adult, but the defeat does not remain without consequences; it would seem to activate a tendency to overcome the defeat by doing actively what one was forced to endure passively: to rule when one had to obey; to beat when one was beaten; in short, to *do* what one was *forced* to *suffer,* or to do what one was forbidden to do. Psychoanalytic data show amply that neurotic tendencies and sexual peculiarities, like voyeurism, compulsive masturbation, or a compulsive need for sexual intercourse, often are the outcome of such early prohibitions. It seems almost as if this compulsive transformation from the passive to the active role were an attempt, even though an unsuccessful one, to heal still open wounds. Perhaps the general attraction of "sin," of doing the forbidden, also finds its explanation here.[12] Not only does that which was not permissible attract, but also that which is not possible. It seems that man is profoundly attracted to move to the personal, social, and natural borders of his existence, as if driven to look beyond the narrow frame in which he is

forced to exist. This impulse may be an important conducive factor in great discoveries, as well as in great crimes.

The adult, too, feels the need to reassure himself that he is *by being able to effect.* The ways to achieve a sense of effecting are manifold: by eliciting an expression of satisfaction in the baby being nursed, a smile from the loved person, sexual response from the lover, interest from the partner in conversation; by work—material, intellectual, artistic. But the same need can also be satisfied by having power *over* others, by experiencing their fear, by the murderer's watching the anguish in the face of his victim, by conquering a country, by torturing people, by sheer destruction of what has been constructed. The need to "effect" expresses itself in interpersonal relations as well as in the relationship to animals, to inanimate nature, and to ideas. In the relationship to others the fundamental alternative is to feel either the potency to effect love or to effect fear and suffering. In the relationship to things, the alternative is between constructing and destroying. Opposite as these alternatives are, they are responses to the same existential need: to effect.

In studying depressions and boredom one can find rich material to show that the sense of being condemned to ineffectiveness—i.e., to complete vital impotence (of which sexual impotence is only a small part)—is one of the most painful and almost intolerable experiences, and man will do almost anything to overcome it, from drug and work addiction to cruelty and murder.

Excitation and Stimulation

The Russian neurologist Ivan Sechenov was the first to establish, in *Reflexes of the Brain,* that the nervous system has the need to be "exercised"—i.e., to experience a certain minimum of excitation. (Sechenov, 1863.)

R. B. Livingston states the same principle:

> The nervous system is a source for activity as well as integration. The brain is not merely *reactive* to outside stimuli; it is it self spontaneously active… Brain cell activity begins in embryonic life and probably contributes to organizational development. Brain development occurs most rapidly prior to birth and for a few months

> thereafter. Following this period of exuberant growth, the rate of development decreases markedly: yet, even in the adult, there is no point beyond which development ceases, beyond which the capacities for reorganization following disease or injury disappear.

And further on:

> The brain consumes oxygen at a rate comparable to that of active muscle. Active muscle can sustain such a rate of oxygen consumption for only a short period, but the nervous system continues its high rate for a lifetime, awake or asleep, from birth until death. (R. B. Livingston, 1967.)

Even in tissue culture, nerve cells continue to be biologically and electrically active.

One area in which the need for constant excitation of the brain can be recognized is the phenomenon of dreaming. It has been well established that a considerable proportion of our sleeping time (about 25 per cent) is spent in dreaming (the difference between individuals is not whether or not they dream, but whether or not they remember their dreams), and that individuals appear to show semipathological reactions if they are prevented from dreaming. (W. Dement, 1960.) It is a relevant question why the brain, comprising only 2 per cent of the body weight, is the only organ (aside from the heart and lungs) that remains active during sleep, while the rest of the body is in a state of rest; or to put it in neurophysiological terms, why the brain uses 20 per cent of the body's total intake of oxygen day *and* night. It would seem that this means that the neurons "ought" to be in a state of greater activity than the cells in other parts of the body. As to the reasons for this, one could speculate that sufficient oxygen supply to the brain is of such vital importance for living that the brain is provided with an extra margin of activity and excitation.

The infant's need for stimulation has been demonstrated by many investigators. R. Spitz has shown the pathological effects of lack of stimulation on infants; the Harlows and others have demonstrated that early deprivation of contact with mother results in severe psychic damage to monkeys.[13] The same problem has been studied by D. E. Schecter in pursuit of his thesis that social stimulation constitutes a basis for the child's

development. He arrives at the conclusion that “without adequate social (including perceptual) stimulation, as for instance in blind and institutionalized infants, deficits develop in emotional and social relationships, in language, abstract thinking, and inner control.” (D. E. Schecter, 1973.)

Experimental studies have also demonstrated the need for stimulation and excitation. E. Tauber and F. Koffler (1966) demonstrated the optokinetic nystagmus reaction to movement in newborns. “Wolff and White (1965) observed visual pursuit of objects with conjugate eye movements in three- to four-day-olds; Fantz (1958) described more prolonged visual fixation on more complex visual patterns as against simpler ones during the early weeks of infancy.” (D. E. Schecter, 1973.)[14] Schecter adds: “Of course, we cannot know the quality of the infant’s subjective perceptual experience but only the fact of a discriminating visual motor response. Only in a loose manner of speaking may we conclude that infants ‘prefer’ complex stimulus patterns.” (D. E. Schecter, 1973.) The experiments on sensory deprivation at McGill University[15] have shown that the elimination of most outside stimuli, even when accompanied by the satisfaction of all physiological needs (with the exception of sex) and rewarded by better-than-average pay, resulted in certain disturbances in perception; the subjects showed irritability, restlessness, and emotional instability to such a degree that a number of them stopped participating in the experiment after only a few hours, in spite of the financial loss.[16]

Observations of daily life indicate that the human organism as well as the animal organism are in need of a certain minimum of excitation and stimulation, as they are of a certain minimum of rest. We see that men eagerly respond to and seek excitation. The list of excitation-generating stimuli is endless. The difference between people—and cultures—lies only in the form taken by the main stimuli for excitation. Accidents, a murder, a fire, a war, sex are sources of excitation; so are love and creative work; Greek drama was certainly as exciting for the spectators as were the sadistic spectacles in the Roman Coliseum, but exciting in a different way. The difference is very important, yet little attention has been given to it. Although this means making a short detour, it seems worthwhile to discuss this difference, if only briefly.

In psychological and neurophysiological literature the term “stimulus” has been used almost exclusively to denote what I call here a “simple”

stimulus. If a man is threatened with danger to his life, his response is simple and immediate, almost reflex-like, because it is rooted in his neurophysiological organization. The same holds true for the other physiological needs like hunger and, to a certain extent, sex. The responding person "reacts," but *he* does not act—by which I mean to say he does not actively integrate any response beyond the minimum activity necessary to run away, attack, or become sexually excited. One might also say that in this kind of response the brain and the whole physiological apparatus act for man.

What is usually overlooked is the fact that there is a different kind of stimulus, one that stimulates *the person to be active*. Such an activating stimulus could be a novel, a poem, an idea, a landscape, music, or a loved person. None of these stimuli produce a simple response; they invite you, as it were, to respond by actively and sympathetically relating yourself to them; by becoming actively *interested*, seeing and discovering ever-new aspects in your "object" (which ceases to be a mere "object"), by becoming more awake and more aware. You do not remain the passive object upon which the stimulus acts, to whose melody your body has to dance, as it were; instead you express your own faculties by being related to the world; you become active and productive. The simple stimulus produces a *drive*—i.e., the person is driven by it; the activating stimulus results in a *striving*—i.e., the person is actively striving for a goal.

The difference between these two kinds of stimuli and responses has very important consequences. Stimuli of the first, simple kind, if repeated beyond a certain threshold, are no longer registered and lose their stimulating effect. (This is due to a neurophysiological principle of economy that eliminates the awareness of stimuli that indicate by their repetitiveness that they are not important.) Continued stimulation requires that the stimulus should either increase in intensity or change in content; a certain element of novelty is required.

Activating stimuli have a different effect. They do not remain "the same"; because of the productive response to them, they are always new, always changing: the stimulated person (the "stimulee") brings the stimuli to life and changes them by always discovering new aspects in them. Between the stimulus and the "stimulee" exists a mutual relationship, not the mechanical one-way relations S ———> R.

This difference is easily confirmed by anybody's experience. One can read a Greek drama, or a poem by Goethe, or a novel by Kafka, or a sermon by Meister Eckhart, or a treatise by Paracelsus, or fragments by the pre-Socratic philosophers, or the writings of Spinoza or Marx without ever getting bored—obviously, these examples are personal, and everyone should replace them by others closer to him; these stimuli are always alive; they wake up the reader and increase his awareness. On the other hand, a cheap novel is boring on a second reading, and conducive to sleep.

The significance of activating and simple stimuli is crucial for the problem of learning. If learning means to penetrate from the surface of phenomena to their roots—i.e., to their causes, from deceptive ideologies to the naked facts, thus approximating the truth—it is an exhilarating, active process and a condition for human growth. (I do not refer here only to book learning, but to the discoveries a child or an illiterate member of a primitive tribe makes of natural or personal events.) If, on the other hand, learning is merely the acquisition of information mediated by conditioning, we are dealing with a simple stimulus in which the person is acted upon by the stimulation of his need for praise, security, success, and so forth.

Contemporary life in industrial societies operates almost entirely with such simple stimuli. What is stimulated are such drives as sexual desire, greed, sadism, destructiveness, narcissism; these stimuli are mediated through movies, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and the commodity market. On the whole, advertising rests upon the stimulation of socially produced desires. The mechanism is always the same: simple stimulation ———> immediate and passive response. Here lies the reason why the stimuli have to be changed constantly, lest they become ineffective. A car that is exciting today will be boring in a year or two—so it must be changed in the search for excitation. A place one knows well automatically becomes boring, so that excitement can be had only by visiting different places, as many as possible in one trip. In such a framework, sexual partners also need to be changed in order to produce excitation.

The description given so far needs to be qualified by stressing that it is not only the stimulus that counts. The most stimulating poem or person will fail completely with someone who is incapable of responding because of his own fear, inhibition, laziness, passivity. The activating stimulus requires a "touchable" stimulee in order to have an effect—touchable not in the sense of being educated, but of being humanly responsive. On the other hand, the

person who is fully alive does not necessarily need any particular outside stimulus to be activated; in fact, he creates his own stimuli. The difference can be clearly seen in children. Up to a certain age (around five years) they are so active and productive that they "make" their own stimuli. They create a whole world out of scraps of paper, wood, stones, chairs, practically anything they find available. But when after the age of six they become docile, unspontaneous, and passive, they want to be stimulated in such a way that they can remain passive and only "re-act." They want elaborate toys and get bored with them after a short while; in brief, they already behave as their elders do with cars, clothes, places to travel, and lovers.

There is another important difference between simple and activating stimuli. The person who is driven by the simple stimulus experiences a mixture of release, thrill satisfaction; when he is "satisfied" (from the Latin *satis-facere,* "to make enough"), he "has enough." The activating stimulation, on the contrary, has no satisfaction point—i.e., it never makes the person feel he "has enough," except, of course, when normal physical tiredness sets in.

I believe that one can formulate a law based on neurophysiological and psychological data in reference to the difference between the two kinds of stimuli: the more "passivating," a stimulus is, the more frequently it must be changed in intensity and/or in kind; the more activating it is, the longer it retains its stimulating quality and the less necessary is change in intensity and content.

I have dealt at such length with the organism's need for stimulation and excitation because it is one of the many factors generating destructiveness and cruelty. It is much easier to get excited by anger, rage, cruelty, or the passion to destroy than by love and productive and active interest; that first kind of excitation does not require the individual to make an effort—one does not need to have patience and discipline, to learn, to concentrate, to endure frustration, to practice critical thinking, to overcome one's narcissism and greed. If the person has failed to grow, simple stimuli are always at hand or can be read about in the newspapers, heard about in the radio news reports, or watched on television and in movies. People can also produce them in their own minds by finding reasons to hate, to destroy, and to control others. (The strength of this craving is indicated by the millions of dollars the mass media make by selling this kind of excitation.) In fact, many married couples stay together for this reason: the marriage

gives them the opportunity to experience hate, quarrels, sadism, and submission. They stay together not *in spite* of their fights, but *because* of them. Masochistic behavior, the pleasure in suffering or submitting, has one of its roots in this need for excitement. Masochistic persons suffer from the difficulty of being able to *initiate* excitation and of reacting readily to normal stimuli; but they can react when the stimulus overpowers them, as it were, when they can give themselves up to the excitement forced upon them.

Boredom—Chronic Depression

The problem of stimulation is closely linked to a phenomenon that has no small part in generating aggression and destructiveness: *boredom.* From a logical standpoint it would have been more adequate to have discussed boredom in the previous chapter, together with other causes of aggression, but this would have been impractical because the discussion on stimulation is a necessary premise for the understanding of boredom.

With regard to stimulation and boredom we can distinguish between three types of persons: (1) The person who is capable of responding productively to activating stimuli is not bored. (2) The person who is in constant need of ever changing, "flat" stimuli is chronically bored, but since he compensates for his boredom, he is not aware of it. (3) The person who fails in the attempt to obtain excitation by any kind of normal stimulation is a very sick individual; sometimes he is acutely aware of his state of mind; sometimes he is not conscious of the fact that he suffers. This type of boredom is fundamentally different from the second type in which boredom is used in a *behavioral* sense, i.e., the person is bored when there is an insufficient stimulation, but he is *capable* of responding when his boredom is compensated. In the third instance it cannot be compensated. We speak here of boredom in a dynamic, characterological sense, and it could be described as a state of chronic depression. But the difference between compensated and uncompensated chronic boredom is only quantitative. In both types of boredom the person lacks in productivity; in the first type he can cure the symptom—although not its cause—by proper stimuli; in the second even the symptom is incurable.

The difference is also visible in the use of the term "bored." If someone says, "I am depressed," he usually refers to a state of mind. If

somebody says, “I am bored,” he usually means to say something about the world outside, indicating that it does not provide him with interesting or amusing stimuli. But when we speak of a “boring person” we refer to the person himself, to his character. We do not mean that he is boring today because he has not told us an interesting story; when we say he is a boring person we mean he is boring *as a person*. There is something dead, unalive, uninteresting in him. Many people would readily admit they are *bored;* very few would admit that they are *boring.*

Chronic boredom—compensated or uncompensated—constitutes one of the major psychopathological phenomena in contemporary technotronic society, although it is only recently that it has found some recognition.[17]

Before entering into the discussion of depressive boredom (in the dynamic sense), some remarks on boredom in a behavioral sense seem to be in order. The persons who are capable of responding productively to “activating stimuli” are virtually never bored—but they are the exception in cybernetic society. The vast majority, while not suffering from a grave illness, can be nevertheless considered suffering from a milder form of pathology: insufficient inner productivity. They are bored unless they can provide themselves with ever changing, simple—not activating—stimuli.

There are several probable reasons that chronic, compensated boredom is generally not considered pathological. Perhaps the main reason is that in contemporary industrial society most people are bored, and a shared pathology—the “pathology or normalcy”—is not experienced as pathology. Furthermore, “normal” boredom is usually not conscious. Most people succeed in compensating for it by participating in a great number of “activities” that prevent them from consciously feeling bored. Eight hours of the day they are busy making a living; when the boredom would threaten to become conscious, after business hours, they avoid this danger by the numerous means that prevent manifest boredom: drinking, watching television, taking a ride, going to parties, engaging in sexual activities, and, the more recent fashion, taking drugs. Eventually their natural need for sleep takes over, and the day is ended successfully if boredom has not been experienced consciously at any point. One may state that one of the main goals of man today is “escape from boredom.” Only if one appreciates the intensity of reactions caused by unrelieved boredom, can one have any idea of the power of the impulses engendered by it.

Among the working class boredom is much more conscious than among the middle and upper classes, as amply evidenced in workers' demands in contract negotiations. They lack the genuine satisfaction experienced by many persons on a higher social level whose work allows them, at least to some extent, to be involved in creative planning, exercising their imaginative, intellectual, and organizational facilities. That this is so is clearly borne out by the fact, amply demonstrated in recent years, that the growing complaint of blue-collar workers today is the painful boredom they experience in their working hours, besides their more traditional complaint about insufficient wages. Industry tries to remedy this in some cases by what is often called "job enrichment," which consists of having the worker do more than one operation, planning and laying out his own job as he likes, and generally assuming more responsibility. This seems to be an answer in the right direction, but it is a very limited one considering the whole spirit of our culture. It has also often been suggested that the problem does not lie in making the work more interesting but in shortening it to such an extent that man can develop his faculties and interests in his leisure time. But the proponents of this idea seem to forget that leisure time itself is manipulated by the consumption of industry and is fundamentally as boring as work, only less consciously so. Work, man's exchange with nature, is such a fundamental part of human existence that only when it ceases to be alienated can leisure time become productive. This, however, is not only a question of changing the nature of work, but of a total social and political change in the direction of subordinating the economy to the real needs of man.

In the picture of the two kinds of nondepressive boredom given so far it would appear that the difference is only between the different kinds of stimuli; whether they are activating or not, they both relieve boredom. This picture, however, is an oversimplification; the difference goes much deeper and complicates considerably what seemed to be a neat formulation. The boredom that is overcome by activating stimuli is really ended, or rather it never existed, because the productive person, ideally speaking, is never bored and has no difficulty in finding the proper stimuli. On the other hand, the unproductive, inwardly passive person remains bored even when his manifest, conscious boredom is relieved for the moment.

Why should this be so? The reason seems to lie in that in the superficial relief from boredom, the whole person, and particularly his

deeper feeling, his imagination, his reason, in short all his essential facilities and psychic potentialities remain untouched; they are not brought to life; the boredom-compensating means are like a bulky food without any nutritional value. The person continues to feel "empty" and unmoved on a deeper level. He "anesthetizes" this uncomfortable feeling by momentary excitation, "thrill," "fun," liquor, or sex—but *unconsciously* he remains bored.

A very busy lawyer who often worked twelve hours a day or more and said that he was absorbed by his job and never felt bored, had the following dream:

> I see myself as a member of a chain gang in Georgia where I was extradited from my hometown in the East for some unknown crime. To my surprise I can easily take off the chains, but I must go on doing the prescribed work, which consists of carrying bags of sand from one truck to another away in the distance and then taking the same bags back to the first truck. I experience a sense of intense mental pain and depression during the dream and wake up in a frightened mood as from a nightmare, relieved that it was only a dream.

Whereas during the first weeks of analytic work he had been quite cheerful, saying how satisfied he felt in life, he was quite shaken by this dream and began to bring up many different ideas about his work. Without going into details, I only want to state that he began to speak about the fact that what he was doing really did not make sense, that it was essentially always the same, and that it served no purpose except that of making money, which he felt was not enough as something to live for. He spoke about the fact that in spite of a good deal of variety in the problems he had to solve, they were basically all the same, or could be solved by a few, ever-repeated methods.

Two weeks later he had the following dream: "I saw myself sitting at the desk in my office, but I felt like a zombie. I hear what goes on and see what people do, but I feel that I am dead and that nothing concerns me."

The associations for this dream brought forward more material about a sense of feeling unalive and depressed. In a third dream he reported: "The building in which my office is located is going up in flames, but nobody knows how it happened. I feel powerless to help."

It hardly needs to be said that this last dream expressed his deep hatred of the law firm of which he is the head; he had been completely unconscious of this because it did not “make sense.”[18]

Another example of unconscious boredom is given by H. D. Esler. He reports of a patient, a good-looking student who carried on with many girl friends and was very successful in this sector of his life; although he insisted that “life is great,” sometimes he felt somewhat depressed. When he was hypnotized during the treatment, he saw “a black barren place with many masks.” When asked where the black barren place was, he said it was inside him. That everything was dull, dull, dull; that the masks represent the different roles he takes to fool people into thinking he is feeling well. He began to express his feelings about life: “It is a feeling of nothingness.” When the therapist asked him if sex was also dull, he said, “Yes, but not as dull as other things.” He stated that “his three children by a previous marriage bored him, although he felt closer to them than he did to most people; that in his nine years of marriage he went through the motions of living and was occasionally relieved by drinking.” He talked about his father as “an ambitious, dull, lonely man who never had a friend in his life.” The therapist asked him if he was lonely with his son; the answer was, “I tried very hard to relate to him but was unable to.” When asked if he wanted to die, the patient said, “Yes, why not?” but he also answered yes when asked whether he wanted to live. Eventually he had a dream in which “there was sunlight and it was warm and there was grass.” When asked whether there were people there he said, “No, there were no people but there was a potential for them coming.” When awakened from the hypnotic trance, he was surprised at the things he had said.[19]

While the depressed and bored feeling was occasionally conscious, it became fully conscious only in the hypnotic state. The patient succeeded by his active and ever-new sexual exploits to compensate for his bored state, just as the lawyer did by work, but the compensation occurred mainly in consciousness. It permitted the patient to repress his boredom, and he could go on with this repression as long as the compensation worked properly. But compensations do not alter the fact that on a deeper level of inner reality the boredom is not removed or even lessened.

It seems that the boredom-compensating consumption offered by the normal channels of our culture does not fulfill its function properly; hence, other means of boredom relief are sought. Alcohol consumption is one of

the means man employs to help him forget his boredom. In the past few years a new phenomenon has demonstrated the intensity of the boredom among members of the middle class. I am referring to the practice of group sex among "swingers." It is estimated that there are in the United States one or two million people, chiefly middle class and mostly conservative in their political and religious views, whose main interest in life is sexual activity shared among several couples, provided that they are not husband and wife. The main condition is that no emotional tie is to develop and that the partners are constantly changed. According to the description by investigators who have studied these people (G. T. Bartell, 1971), they explain that before they started swinging they were so bored that even many hours of television viewing did not help them. The personal relationship between husband and wife was such that there was nothing left to communicate about. This boredom is relieved by the constantly changing sexual stimuli, and even their marriages have, as they say, "improved," because they now at least have something to talk about—i.e., the sexual experiences of each of them with other men and women. "Swinging" is a somewhat more complex version of what used to be simple marital promiscuity, which is hardly a new phenomenon; what is perhaps new is the systematic exclusion of affects, and that group sex is now proposed as a means "to save a tired marriage."

Another more drastic means for the relief of boredom is the use of psychodrugs, starting in the teens and spreading to older age groups, particularly among those who are not socially settled and have no interesting work to do. Many users of drugs, especially among young people who have a genuine longing for a deeper and more genuine experience of life—indeed, many of them are distinguished by their life affirmation, honesty, adventurousness, and independence—claim that the use of drugs "turns them on" and widens their horizon of experience. I do not question this claim. But the taking of drugs does not change their character and, hence, does not eliminate the permanent roots of their boredom. It does not promote a higher state of development; this can be achieved only by taking the path of patient, effortful work within oneself, by acquiring insight and learning how to be concentrated and disciplined. Drugs are in no way conducive to "instant enlightenment."

Not the least dangerous result of insufficiently compensated boredom is violence and destructiveness. This outcome most frequently takes the

passive form of being attracted to reports of crimes, fatal accidents, and other scenes of bloodshed and cruelty that are the staple diet fed to the public by press, radio, and television. People eagerly respond to such reports because they are the quickest way to produce excitement, and thus alleviate boredom without any inner activity. Usually overlooked in the discussion of the effect of the portrayal of violence is that inasmuch as portrayal of violence has an effect, boredom is a necessary condition. Yet there is only a short step from passive enjoyment of violence and cruelty to the many ways of actively producing excitement by sadistic or destructive behavior; the difference between the "innocent" pleasure of embarrassing or "teasing" someone and participating in a lynch mob is only quantitative. In either instance the bored person himself produces the source of excitation if it does not offer itself ready-made. The bored person often is the organizer of a "mini-Colosseum" in which he produces his small-scale equivalents of the large scale cruelty staged in the Colosseum. Such persons have no interest in anything, nor do they have any contact with anybody except of the most superficial kind. Everybody and everything leaves them cold. They are effectively frozen, feel no joy—but also no sorrow or pain. They feel nothing. The world is gray, the sky is not blue; they have no appetite for life and often would rather be dead than alive. Sometimes they are acutely and painfully aware of this state of mind, often they are not.

This type of pathology offers problems of diagnosis. The most severe cases might be diagnosed by many psychiatrists as a psychotic endogenous depression. Yet the diagnosis seems questionable because some characteristic features of endogenous depression are lacking. These persons do not tend to accuse themselves, to feel guilty, to be preoccupied with their failure, nor do they have the typical facial expression of melancholic patients.[20]

Aside from this most severe type of depression-boredom, there is a much more frequent clinical picture for which the most obvious diagnosis would be chronic "neurotic depression." (E. Bleuler, 1969.) In the clinical picture so frequent today not only causes for but also the fact of being depressed is unconscious; such persons are often not aware of feeling depressed, yet it can be easily demonstrated that they are. The terms more recently used, "masked depression" or "smiling depressions," seem to characterize the picture quite well. The diagnostic problem is still more

complicated by the features in the clinical picture that lend themselves to a diagnosis of a “schizoid” character.

I shall not pursue this diagnostic problem any further because it does not seem to contribute much to a better understanding of such persons. The difficulties of a correct diagnosis will be treated later on. Perhaps we deal, in the persons suffering from chronic, uncompensated boredom, with a peculiar blend of depressed and schizophrenic elements in varying degrees of malignancy. What matters for our purpose is not the diagnostic label, but the fact that among such persons we find extreme forms of destructiveness. They frequently do not seem to be bored or depressed at all. They can adapt themselves to their environment and often seem to be happy; *some are* apparently so well adapted that parents, teachers, ministers praise them as models. Others come to the attention of the authorities due to a variety of criminal acts and are considered “asocial” or “criminal,” although not bored or depressed. Usually they tend to repress the awareness of being bored; most of all they want to appear perfectly normal to everyone else. When they come to a psychotherapist they will report that they find it difficult to choose a career, or to study, but generally they tend to present as normal a picture as they can. It takes a concerned and skilled observer to discover the sickness hidden behind the smooth, cynical surface.

H. D. Esler has done just that and has found among many adolescents in a boys’ training school the condition of what he calls “unconscious depression.”[21] I shall give in the following some examples that also demonstrate that this condition is one of the sources of acts and destructiveness that seem in many instances to be the only form of relief.

One girl, hospitalized in a state mental hospital, had slashed her wrists and explained her act by saying that she wanted to see if she had any blood. This was a girl who felt nonhuman, without any response to anyone; she did not believe she could express or, for that matter, feel any affect. (Schizophrenia was excluded by a thorough clinical examination.) Her lack of interest and incapacity to respond was so great that to see her own blood was the only way in which she could convince herself that she was alive and human.

One of the boys in, the training school, for instance, threw rocks LIP on top of his garage and let them roll down, and would try to catch each rock with his head. His explanation was that this was the only way in which he could *feel something*. He made five suicidal attempts. He cut himself in

areas that would be painful and always made it known to the guards that he had done so, in order that he could be saved. He reported that feeling the pain made him feel at least something.

Another adolescent spoke of walking city streets “with a knife up my sleeve, and I would stick it into people as they walked by.” He experienced pleasure in watching the agony on the victim’s face. He also took dogs into the alley and killed them with his knife “just for fun.” One time he said with emphasis, “Now I think those dogs felt it when I stuck the knife into them.” The same boy confessed that while he was chopping wood during an outing in the woods with a school teacher and his wife, he saw the school teacher’s wife standing there alone and had a tremendous urge to plant the axe in her head. Fortunately, she reacted on seeing a strange look on his face and asked for the axe. This seventeen-year-old boy had a baby face; an intern who saw him for vocational counseling thought he was charming and could not understand why he was in the institution. The truth was that the charm he portrayed was manipulative and very shallow.

Similar cases are to be found today all over the Western world and are occasionally reported in the papers. The following UPI and AP dispatch from Bisbee, Arizona, 1972, is a typical example:

> A 16-year-old high school honor student and choir boy was in custody at a juvenile home today after allegedly telling police he shot his parents to death because he wanted to see how it would feel to kill somebody.
>
> The bodies of Joseph Roth, 60, and his wife, Gertrude, 57, were found at their home in nearby Douglas on Thanksgiving Day by Sheriff’s deputies. Authorities said both had been shot once in the chest with a hunting rifle Wednesday night. Roth was a high school audiovisual instructor and Mrs. Roth was a junior high teacher.
>
> Cochise County attorney Richard Riley said the boy, Bernard J. Roth—“the nicest boy you want to meet”—turned himself in to police Thursday and was composed and polite while being questioned.
>
> “‘The people [his parents] are getting old,”’ Riley quoted the boy as saying. “I’m not mad at them. I have no hostilities.”
>
> “The boy said he had been having thoughts about killing his parents for a long time,” Riley said. “He wanted to know what it felt like to kill somebody.”[22]

The motive for these killings does not seem to be hate, but as in the cases mentioned before, an unbearable sense of boredom and impotence and the need to experience that there is someone who will react, someone on whom one can make a dent, some deed that will make an end of the monotony of daily experience. Killing is one way of experiencing that one is and that one can produce an effect on another being.

This discussion of depression-boredom has dealt only with the psychological aspects of boredom. This does not imply that neurophysiological abnormalities may not also be involved, but as Bleuler has already emphasized, they could only play a secondary role, while the decisive conditions are to be found in the overall environmental situation. I think it is highly probable that even cases of severe depression-boredom would be less frequent and less intense, even given the same family constellation, in a society where a mood of hope and love of life predominated. But in recent decades the opposite is increasingly the case, and thus a fertile soil for the development of individual depressive states is provided.

Character Structure

There is a need of a different kind, rooted exclusively in the human situation—the need for development of a *character Structure.* This need has to do with the phenomenon that was dealt with before, the decreasing significance of instinctive equipment in man. Effective behavior presupposes that one can act immediately—that is, without being delayed by too much doubt and in a relatively integrated manner. This is precisely the dilemma of which Kortlandt has spoken (see chapter 6) with regard to chimpanzees when he mentions their lack of decisiveness and their hesitant and somewhat ineffective behavior. (A. Kortlandt, 1962.)

It seems plausible to speculate that man, being still less determined by instinct than the chimpanzee, would have been a biological failure if he had not developed a substitute for the instincts he lacked. This substitute also had to have the *function* of instincts: enabling man to act *as if* he were motivated by instincts. This substitute is the human character. Character is the specific structure in which human energy is organized in the pursuit of man’s goals; it motivates behavior according to its dominant goals: a person acts “instinctively,” we say, in accordance with his character. To use

Heraclitus's phrase, character is man's fate. The miser does not ponder whether he should save or spend; he is driven to save and to hoard: the exploitative-sadistic character is driven by the passion to exploit; the sadistic character, by the passion to control; the loving-productive character cannot help striving for love and sharing. These character-conditioned drives and strivings are so strong and unquestionable for the respective persons that they feel that theirs is simply a "natural" reaction, and find it difficult to really believe that there are other people whose nature is quite different. When they cannot help becoming aware of it, they prefer to think that these others suffer from some kind of deformation and are deviants from human nature. Anybody who has some sensitivity in judging other people (it is of course much more difficult with regard to oneself) senses whether a person has a sadistic or a destructive or a loving character; he sees enduring traits behind the overt behavior and will be capable of sensing the insincerity of a destructive character who *behaves* as if he were a loving person.[23]

The question is: Why was the species man, in contrast to the chimpanzee, able to develop a character? The answer may lie in certain biological considerations.

Human groups from the very beginning have lived under very diverse environmental circumstances, both as regards different areas in the world and as regards fundamental changes of climate and vegetation within the same area. Since the emergence of *Homo* there has been relatively little adaptation to differences transmitted by genetic change, although there has been some. But the more *Homo* developed the less was adaptation a result of genetic changes, and in the last forty thousand years such changes are virtually nil. Yet these different environmental situations made it necessary for each group to adapt its behavior to these respective situations, not only by learning but also by developing a "social character." The concept of social character is based on the consideration that each form of society (or social class) needs to use human energy in the specific manner necessary for the functioning of that particular society. Its members must *want* to do what they *have* to do if the society is to function properly. *This process of transforming general psychic energy into specific psychosocial energy is mediated by the social character*. (E. Fromm, 1932a, 1941a, 1947a, 1970a.) The means by which social character is formed are essentially cultural. Through the agency of the parents, society transmits to the young its values,

prescriptions, commands, etc. But since chimpanzees have no language they cannot transmit symbols, values, and ideas; in other words, they lack the conditions for the formation of character. In more than a rudimentary sense, *character is a human phenomenon;* only man was able to create a substitute for his lost instinctive adaptation.

The acquisition of character was a very important and necessary element in the process of human survival, but it had also many disadvantages and even dancers. Inasmuch as character is formed by traditions and motivates man without appealing to his reason, it is often not adapted to or is sometimes even in direct contradiction to new conditions. For example, concepts like the absolute sovereignty of the state are rooted in an older type of social character and are dangerous for the survival of man in the atomic age.

The concept of character is crucial for the understanding of the manifestations of malignant aggression. The destructive and sadistic passions in a person are usually organized in his character system. In a sadistic person, for instance, the sadistic drive is a dominant part of his character structure and motivates him to behave sadistically, limited only by his concern for self-preservation. In a person with a sadistic character, a sadistic impulse is constantly active, waiting only for a proper situation and a fitting rationalization to be acted out. Such a person corresponds almost completely to Lorenz's hydraulic model (see chapter 1) inasmuch as character-rooted sadism is a spontaneously flowing impulse, seeking for occasions to be expressed and creating such occasions where they are not readily at hand by "appetitive behavior." The decisive difference is that the source of the sadistic passion lies in the character and not in a phylogenetically programmed neural area; *hence it is not common to all men, but only to those who share the same character.* We shall see later some examples of the sadistic and the destructive character and the conditions necessary for their formation.

Conditions for the Development of Character-Rooted Passions

The discussion of man's existential needs has shown that these can be satisfied in different ways. The need for an object of devotion can be answered by devotion to God, love, and truth—or by idolatry of destructive idols. The need for relatedness can be answered by love and kindness—or

by dependence, sadism, masochism, destructiveness. The need for unity and rootedness can be answered by the passions for solidarity, brotherliness, love, and mystical experience—or by drunkenness, drug addiction, depersonalization. The need for effectiveness can be answered by love, productive work—or by sadism and destructiveness. The need for stimulation and excitation can be answered by productive interest in man, nature, art, ideas—or by a greedy pursuit of ever-changing pleasures.

What are the *conditions* for the development of character-rooted passions?

We must consider first that these passions do not appear as single units but as *syndromes*. Love, solidarity, justice, reason are interrelated; they are all manifestations of the same productive orientation that I shall call the "life-furthering syndrome." On the other hand, sadomasochism, destructiveness, greed, narcissism, incestuousness also belong together and are rooted in the same basic orientation: "life-thwarting syndrome." Where one element of the syndrome is to be found, the others also exist in various degrees, but this does not mean that someone is ruled either by the one *or* by the other syndrome. In fact, people in whom this is the case are the exceptions: the average person is a blend of both syndromes; what matters for the behavior of the person and the possibility of change is precisely the respective strength of each syndrome.

Neurophysiological Conditions

As to the neurophysiological conditions for the development of the two respective kinds of passions, we must start out from the fact that man is unfinished and "uncompleted." (L. Eiseley, 1971.) Not only is his brain not fully developed at birth, but the state of disequilibrium in which he finds himself leaves him as an open-ended process to which there is no final solution.

But is he—being deprived of the help of instincts and equipped only with the "weak reed" of reason by which he deceives himself so easily—left without any help from his neurophysiological equipment? It seems that this assumption would miss an important point. His brain, so superior to that of the primate not only in size but also in the quality and structure of its neurons, has the capacity to recognize what kinds of goals are conducive to man's health and growth, physically as well as psychically. It can set goals

leading to the realization of man's real, rational needs, and man can organize his society in ways conducive to this realization. Man is not only unfinished, incomplete, burdened by contradictions; he can also be defined as a *being in active search of his optimal development,* even though this search must often fail because external conditions are too unfavorable.

The assumption that man is a being in active search of his optimal development is not without support from neurophysiological data. No less an investigator than C. J. Herrick wrote:

> Man's capacity for intelligently directed self-development confers upon him the ability to determine the pattern of his culture and so to shape the course of human evolution in directions of his own choice. This ability, which no other animals have, is man's most distinctive characteristic, and it is perhaps the most significant fact known to science. (C. J. Herrick, 1928.)

Livingston makes some very pertinent remarks with regard to the same problem:

> It is not established beyond peradventure of doubt that various levels of nervous system organization are interdependently interrelated with one another. Somehow, *by means that are still mysterious, purposive behavior organized at each of these different levels of integrative function becomes expressed by a linked sequence of over-all purposes representing some kind of final judicious reckoning* among contending functions. The purposes of the whole organism are clearly manifested and continuously served according to some integrated internal point of view. (R. B. Livingston. 1967a. Italics added.)

Discussing the problem of needs that transcend the primary physiological ones Livingston states:

> Some coal-seeking systems at the molecular level can be identified by physical-chemical techniques. Other goal-seeking systems at the level of the brain circuitry can be identified by neurophysiological techniques. At each level, parts of these systems are concerned with the appetites and satisfactions that govern behavior. All of these goal-seeking systems originate in and are intrinsic to protoplasmic

> materials. Many such systems are peculiarly specialized and are located in particular nervous and endocrine systems. Evolutionarily elaborate organisms possess appetites and satisfactions, not only to fulfill vegetative needs; not simply for the obligate cooperations required for sexual union, the rearing of young, and the safeguarding of food, family and territory; not just for the adaptive behaviors essential to meet successfully the vicissitudes of environmental change; but also for *extra energies,* strivings, and outreachings—the *extravagances that go beyond mere survival*. (R. B. Livingston, 1967. Italics added.)

He goes on to say:

> The brain is a product of evolution, just as are teeth and claws; but we can expect much more of the brain because of its capacities for constructive adaptation. Neuroscientists can take as their long-range objective the understanding of the fullest potentialities of mankind in order to help humanity become more fully self-aware and to illuminate man's nobler options. Above all, it is the human brain, with its capacities for memory, learning, communication, imagination, creativity, and the powers of self-awareness, that distinguishes humanity. (R. B. Livingston, 1967.)

Livingston holds that cooperation, faith, mutual trust, and altruism are built into the fabric of the nervous system and propelled by internal satisfactions attached to them.[24] Internal satisfactions are by no means restricted to the appetites. According to Livingston:

> Gratifications also relate to positive satisfactions springing from buoyant health, vigorous and rested; delight accompanying both genetically endowed and socially acquired values; joys, solitary and shared feelings of pleasant excitement, engendered by exposure to novelty and during the quest for novelty. Gratifications result from satisfaction of curiosity and the pleasure of inquiry, from the acquisition of widening degrees of individual and collective freedom. Positive features of satisfaction enable humans to sustain unbelievable privations and yet to cling to life and, beyond that, to attach

> importance to beliefs that may pass the values of life itself. (R. B. Livingston, 1967.)

Livingston's crucial point, as well as that of the other authors to be cited in the following, is in fundamental opposition to older instinctivistic thinking. They do not speculate on which *special* area of the brain "generates" higher strivings, such as those for solidarity, altruism, mutual trust, and truth, but they look at *the brain system as a whole from the standpoint of evolution in the service of survival.*

One very interesting suggestion has been made by C. von Monakow. He proposed the existence of a *biological conscience* (syneidesis), whose function it is to secure optimal security satisfaction, adaptation, and strivings for perfection. Von Monakow argues that the functioning of the organism in a direction serving its development gives *Klisis* (joy, lust, happiness)—hence a desire to repeat this kind of behavior; on the other hand, behavior harmful to the optimal development of the organism results in *Ekklesis* (unpleasure, bad feeling) and drives a person to avoid the pain-producing behavior. (C. von Monakow, 1950.)

H. von Foerster has argued that empathy and love are qualities inherent in the brain system. His starting point is the theory of cognition, and he raises the question of how it is possible for two people to communicate, since language presupposes shared experience. Since environment does not exist for man by itself but in its relationship to the human observer, von Foerster reasons, communication presupposes that we find "the like representation of environment in the two elements who are separated by their skins, but alike in their structure. When they realize and utilize this insight then A knows what A* knows, because A identifies himself with A* and we have the equality I-Thou … Clearly, identification is the strongest coalition—and its most subtle manifestation is love." (H. von Foerster, 1963.)[25]

All these speculations, however, seem to be contradicted by the hard fact that man in the forty thousand years since his final birth has failed to develop these "higher" strivings more fully but seems to have been governed principally by his greed and destructiveness. Why did the biologically built-in strivings not remain—or become—predominant?

Before entering into a discussion of this question, let us qualify it. While granting that we do not have much direct knowledge of man's psyche

before the beginning of the Neolithic period, there are, as we have seen, good reasons to assume that the most primitive men, from the hunter-gatherers up to the early agriculturalists, were not characterized by destructiveness or sadism. In fact, the negative qualities that are commonly attributed to human nature became more powerful and wide-spread as civilization developed. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that the version of the "higher goals" was expressed early in history by great teachers who proclaimed the new goals in protest against the principles of their respective cultures; and these aims, in both religious and secular form, have had a profound appeal again and again to the hearts of men who were conditioned by their society to believe in the contrary. Indeed, man's striving for freedom, dignity, solidarity, and truth has been one of the strongest motivations to bring about historical change.

Even considering all these qualifications, however, the fact remains that built-in higher tendencies have thus far been largely defeated, and persons living today experience this with special anxiety.

Social Conditions

What are the reasons for this defeat?

The only satisfactory answer to this question seems to lie in the social circumstances under which man lives. Throughout most of his history these circumstances, while furthering man's intellectual and technical development, have been inimical to the full development of those built-in potentialities to which the authors cited above are referring.

The most elementary instances showing the influence of environmental factors on personality are those of the *direct* influence of environment on the growth of the brain. It is by now a well-established fact that malnutrition can prevent the normal growth of the infant's brain. That not only food, but other factors, such as freedom of movement and play, can have a direct influence on the growth of the brain has also been shown by animal experiments. Investigators separated rats into two groups and placed them, respectively, in "enriched" and "restricted" environments. The former were raised in a large cage where they could move freely, play with various objects and with each other, whereas the "restricted" animals were raised singly in small isolation cages. In other words, the "enriched" animals had a much greater opportunity for stimulation and motor exercise than the

“restricted” animals. The investigators found that in the first group the cortical gray matter was thicker than in the “restricted” group (although their body weight was lower). (E. L. Bennett *et al.*, 1964.)

In a similar study Altman “obtained histological evidence of an increase in the area of the cortex in the enriched animals, and autoradiographic evidence of an enhanced rate of cellular proliferation in the mature enriched animals.” (J. Altman and G. D. Das, 1964.) Preliminary results from Altman’s laboratory “indicate that other behavioral variables, such as handling rats during infancy, can radically alter the development of the brain, in particular cell proliferation in such structures as the cerebellar cortex, the hippocampal dentate gyrus, and the neocortex.” (J. Altman, 1967a.)

Applying the results of these experiments to man would suggest that the growth of the brain depends not only on such outside factors as food, but also on the “warmth” with which a baby is handled and held, on the degree of stimulation it receives, and on the degree of freedom it has to move, to play, and to express itself. But brain development does not stop in infancy, or even in puberty or adulthood. As R. B. Livingston has pointed out: “There is no point beyond which development ceases, beyond which the capacities for reorganization following disease or injury disappear.” (R. B. Livingston, 1967.) It seems that throughout life such environmental factors as stimulation, encouragement, and affection may continue to have a subtle influence on brain process.

We know little as yet about the direct influence of the environment on the development of the brain. Fortunately we know a great deal more about the role of social factors on the development of character (although all affective processes have, of course, a substrate in brain processes). It would seem that at this point we have joined the main stream of thought in the social sciences-the thesis that man’s character is formed by the society in which he lives, or, in behavioristic terms, by the social conditioning to which he is exposed. However, there is a fundamental difference between this view and the one proposed here. The environmentalist view of the social sciences is essentially relativistic; according to it, man is a blank sheet of paper on which the culture writes its text. He is molded by his society for better or worse, “better” or “worse” being considered value judgments from an ethical or religious standpoint.[26] The position taken here assumes that man has an immanent goal, that man’s biological constitution

is the source of norms for living. He has the possibility for full development and growth, *provided the external conditions that are given are conducive to this aim.*

This means that there are specific environmental conditions conducive to the optimal growth of man and, if our previous assumptions are correct, to the development of the life-furthering syndrome. On the other hand, to the extent these conditions are lacking, he will become a crippled, stunted man, characterized by the presence of the life-thwarting syndrome.

It is truly astonishing that this view should be considered "idealistic" or "unscientific" by so many who would not dream of questioning the relation between constitution and norms in regard to physical development and health. It is hardly necessary to belabor this point. There exists a wealth of data, particularly in the field of nutrition, to demonstrate that certain kinds of food are conducive to growth and the health of the body, while others are responsible for organic dysfunctioning, illness, and premature death. It is also well known that not only food can have such influence on health, but also other factors, such as exercise or stress. Man in this respect is not different from any other organism. As any farmer or horticulturalist knows, the seed, for its proper germination and for the growth of the plant, needs a certain degree of moisture, warmth, and type of soil. If these conditions are not met, the seed will rot and die in the soil; the plant will be stillborn. If the conditions are optimal, the fruit tree will grow to its optimal possibility and bear fruit that is as perfect as this particular tree can produce. If the conditions are less than optimal, the tree and its fruit will be defective or crippled.

The question, then, that confronts us is: Which are the environmental conditions that are conducive to the full development of man's potentialities?

Many thousands of books have been written about this question, and hundreds of different answers have been given. Surely I shall not attempt to give an answer within the context of this book.[27] Some general statements, however, can be made, even if briefly:

The historical record as well as the study of individuals indicate that the presence of freedom, activating stimuli, the absence of exploitative control, and the presence of "man-centered" modes of production are favorable for the growth of man; and that the presence of the opposite conditions is unfavorable. Furthermore, an increasing number of people

have become aware of the fact that it is not the presence of one or two conditions that have an impact, but a whole system of factors. This means that the general conditions conducive to the fullest growth of man—and, of course, each stage of individual development has its own specific conditions—can only be found in a social system in which various favorable conditions are combined to secure the right soil.

The reasons why social scientists have not considered the question of the optimal social conditions for man's growth a matter of primary concern can be easily discerned if one recognizes the sad fact that, with a few outstanding exceptions, social scientists are essentially apologists for and not critics of the existing social system. This can be so because, unlike the natural sciences, their results are of little value for the functioning of society. On the contrary, erroneous results and superficial treatment have a useful function as ideological "cement," while the truth is, as always, a threat to the status quo.[28] In addition, the task of studying the problem adequately has been made more difficult by the assumption that "what people desire is good for them." One overlooked the fact that people's desires are often harmful for them, and that the desires themselves can be symptoms of dysfunctioning, or of suggestion, or of both. Everybody today knows, for instance, that drug addiction is not desirable, even if many people desire the use of drugs. Since our whole economic system rests on generating desires that the commodities can profitably satisfy, it is hardly to be expected that a critical analysis of the irrationality of desires would be popular.

But we cannot stop here. Why, we must ask, do not the majority of men use their reason to recognize their real interests as human beings? Is it only because they have been brainwashed and forced to obey? Furthermore, why have not a greater number of leaders recognized that their own best interests as human beings were not served by the system they presided over? To explain everything in terms of their greed or their cunning, as the philosophers of the Enlightenment were prone to do, does not penetrate to the core of the problem.

As Marx has demonstrated in his theory of historical development, in the attempt to change and improve social conditions man is constantly limited by the material factors of his environment, such as ecological conditions, climate, technique, geographical situation, and cultural traditions. As we have seen, primitive hunter-gatherers and early

agriculturalists lived in a relatively well-balanced environment that was conducive to generating constructive rather than destructive passions. But in the process of growth, man changes, and he changes his environment. He progresses intellectually and technologically; this progress, however, creates situations that are conducive to the development of the life-thwarting character syndrome. We have followed this development, however sketchily, in the description of the transformation of society from that of early hunter-gatherers to the "urban revolution." In order to create the necessary leisure to enable men to become philosophers and scholars, to build works of art like the Egyptian pyramids—briefly, in order to create culture, man had to have slaves, make war, and conquer territory. It was for this very growth in some respects, particularly intellectually, artistically, and scientifically, that man had to create circumstances that crippled him and prevented his growth in other respects, particularly affectively. This was so because the productive forces were not sufficiently developed to permit the coexistence of both technical and cultural progress *and* freedom, to permit uncrippled development for all. The material conditions have their own laws and the wish to change them is of itself not enough. Indeed, if the earth had been created as a paradise where man would not be bound by the stubbornness of material reality, his reason might have been sufficient condition to create the proper environment for his unimpeded growth, with enough for all to eat and, simultaneously, the possibility of freedom. But to speak in terms of the biblical myth, man was expelled from Paradise and cannot return. He was saddled with the curse of the conflict between himself and nature. The world was not made for man; he is thrown into it, and only by his own activity and reason can he create a world which is conducive to his full development, which is his human home. His rulers themselves were executors of historical necessity, even though they were often evil men who followed their whims and failed to execute their historical task. Irrationality and personal evil became decisive factors only in those periods when the external conditions were such that they would have permitted human progress and when this progress was impeded by the character deformation of the rulers—and the ruled.

Nevertheless, there have always been visionaries who clearly recognized the goals for man's social and individual evolution. But their "Utopians" were not "utopic" in the sense that they were unrealizable daydreams They took place in the nowhere (utopia). But nowhere is not "at-

no-time." By this I mean to say, they were "utopian" because they did not exist at the moment at any given place-and perhaps could not exist; but utopian does not mean that they cannot be realized in time-at another time. Marx's concept of socialism, until now unrealized anywhere in the world (and certainly not in the Socialist countries), was not considered a utopia by him because he believed that at this point of historical evolution the material conditions for its realization were already present.[29]

On the Rationality of Instincts and Passions

It is a widely accepted notion that instincts are irrational because they defy logical thought. Is this correct? Furthermore, can the character-rooted passions be classified as either rational or irrational?

The terms "reason" and "rational" are conventionally applied only to thought processes; a "rational" thought is supposed to obey the laws of logic and not to be distorted by emotional and often pathological factors. But "rational" and "irrational" are sometimes also applied to actions and feelings. Thus an economist may call irrational the introduction of expensive labor-saving machinery in a country that lacks skilled and abounds in unskilled workers. Or he may call the annual world expenditure of $180 billion for armaments (80 per cent of it by the superpowers) irrational because it serves the production of things that have no use value in times of peace. Or a psychiatrist may call a neurotic symptom, such as a wash compulsion or groundless anxieties, irrational because they are the outcome of a dysfunction of the mind and tend to further disturb its proper functioning.

I propose to call *rational any thought, feeling or act that promotes the adequate functioning and growth of the whole of which it is a part, and irrational that which tends to weaken or destroy the whole.* It is obvious that only the empirical analysis of a system can show what is to be considered rational or irrational, respectively.[30]

Applying this concept of rationality to instincts (organic drives), the unavoidable conclusion is that they are rational. From a Darwinian standpoint, it is precisely the function of instincts to sustain life adequately, to ensure the survival of the individual and the species. The animal behaves rationally because it is almost entirely determined by instinct, and man would behave rationally if he were mainly determined by instinct. His

search for food, his defensive aggressivensss (or flight), and his sexual desires, as far as they are organically stimulated, are not conducive to irrational behavior. Man's irrationality is caused by the fact that he lacks instincts, and not by their presence.

What about the rationality of his character-rooted passions? Following our criterion of rationality, they must be divided. The life-furthering passions must be considered rational because they further the growth and well-being of the organism; the life-strangling passions must be considered irrational because they interfere with growing and well-being. But a qualification is necessary. The destructive or cruel person has become so because he lacks the conditions for further growth. Under the given circumstances he cannot, as it were, do better. His passions are irrational in terms of the possibilities of man, yet they have their rationality in terms of the particular individual and social situation within which a person lives. The same applies to the historical process. The "megamachines" (L. Mumford, 1967) of antiquity were rational in this sense, even Fascism and Stalinism could be considered rational if they were the only historically possible next step under the circumstances. This, of course, is what their defenders claim. But they would have to prove that there were no other and historically more adequate options available, as I believe there were.[31]

It needs to be repeated that life-thwarting passions are as much an answer to man's existential needs as life-furthering passions: they are both profoundly human. The former necessarily develop when the realistic conditions for the realization of the latter are absent. Man the destroyer may be called vicious because destructiveness is a vice; but he is human. He has not "regressed to animal existence" and is not motivated by animal instincts; he cannot change the structure of his brain. One might consider him an *existential failure,* a man who has failed to become what he could be according to the possibilities of his existence. In any case, for a man to be stunted in his growth and become vicious is as much a real possibility as to develop fully and to be productive; the one or the other outcome mainly depends on the presence—or absence—of social conditions conducive to growth.

It must at the same time be added that in speaking of social circumstances as being responsible for man's development, I do not imply that he is the helpless object of circumstances. Environmental factors further or hinder the development of certain traits and set the limits within

which man acts. Nevertheless, man's reason and will are powerful factors in the process of his development, individually and socially. It is not history that makes man; man creates himself in the process of history. Only dogmatic thinking, the result of the laziness of mind and heart, tries to construct simplistic schemes of the either-or type that block any real understanding.[32]

Psychical Function of the Passions

Man must satisfy his bodily needs in order to survive, and his instincts motivate him to act in favor of his survival. If his instincts determined most of his behavior, he would have no special problems in living and would be "a contented cow" provided he had ample food.[33] But for man the satisfaction of his organic drives alone does not make him happy, nor does it guarantee his sanity. Nor is his problem that of first satisfying his physical needs and then, as a kind of luxury, developing his character-rooted passions. The latter are present from the very beginning of his existence, and often have even greater strength than his organic drives.

When we look at individual and mass behavior we find that the desire to satisfy hunger and sex constitutes only a minor part of human motivation. The major motivations of man are his rational and irrational passions: the strivings for love,[34] tenderness, solidarity, freedom, and truth, as well as the drive to control, to submit, to destroy; narcissism, greed, envy, ambition. These passions move him and excite him; they are the stuff from which not only dreams, but all religions, myths, drama, art are made—in short, all that makes life meaningful and worth living. People motivated by these passions risk their lives. They may commit suicide when they fail to attain the goal of their passion; but they do not commit suicide for the lack of sexual satisfaction, and not even because they are starving. But whether they are driven by hate or love, the power of the human passion is the same.

That this is so can hardly he doubted. The question why it is so is more difficult to answer. Yet some hypothetical speculations can be offered.

The first is a suggestion which only neurophysiologists could examine. Considering that the brain is in need of constant excitation, a fact we have already discussed, one could imagine that this need would require the existence of passionate strivings because they alone provide for constant excitation.

Another hypothesis lies in the realm already dealt with in this book—the uniqueness of human experience. As we have said, the fact that man is aware of himself, of his powerlessness and isolation, seems to make it intolerable for him to live as nothing but an object. All this, of course, was well-known to most thinkers, dramatists, and novelists throughout history. Can one really imagine that the core of the Oedipus drama is the frustration of Oedipus's sexual desires for his mother? Or that Shakespeare could have written a *Hamlet* centered around the sexual frustration of the play's principal character? Yet that is precisely what classic psychoanalysts seem to imagine, and with them, other contemporary reductionists.

Man's instinctual drives are necessary but trivial; man's passions that unify his energy in the search of their goal belong to the realm of the devotional or sacred. The system of the trivial is that of "making a living"; the sphere of the "sacred" is that of living beyond physical survival—it is the sphere in which man stakes his fate, often his life, the sphere in which his deepest motivations, those that make life worth living, are rooted.[35]

In his attempt to transcend the triviality of his life man is driven to seek adventure, to look beyond and even to cross the limiting frontier of human existence. This is what makes great virtues and great vices, creation as well as destruction, so exciting and attractive. The hero is the one who has the courage to go to the frontier without succumbing to fear and doubt. The average man is a hero even in his unsuccessful attempt to be a hero; he is motivated by the desire to make some sense of his life and by the passion to walk as far as *he* can to its frontiers.

This picture needs an important qualification. Individuals live in a society that provides them with ready-made patterns that pretend to give meaning to their lives. In our society, for instance, they are told that to be successful, to be a "bread winner," to raise a family, to be a good citizen, to consume goods and pleasures gives meaning to life. But while for most people this suggestion works on the conscious level, they do not acquire a genuine sense of meaningfulness, they do not make up for the lacking center within themselves. The suggested patterns wear thin and with increasing frequency fail. That this is happening today on a large scale is evidenced by the increase in drug addiction, by the lack of genuine interest in anything, in the decline of intellectual and artistic creativity, and in the increase of violence and destructiveness.

[1]Exceptions: among the Greeks would be the Stoics, defenders of the equality of all men, and in the Renaissance, such humanists as Erasmus, Thomas More, and Juan Luis Vives.

[2]Richard M. Bucke was a Canadian psychiatrist, a friend of Emerson, a hold and imaginative mind, and in his time one of the leading figures in North American psychiatry. Although he is completely forgotten by psychiatrists, his book Cosmic Consciousness (rev. ed. 19.16) has been read for almost a hundred years by nonprofessionals.

[3]Cf. the discussion in D. Pilbeam (1970); also M. F. A. Montagu (1967) and G. Smolla (1967).

[4]Cf., for an understanding of Marx's concept of human nature, E. Fromm (1961b, 1968a).

[5]The term "instincts" is used here in a loose fashion in order to simplify the discussion. It is not used in the dated sense of "instinct" as excluding learning, but in the sense of "organic drives."

[6]C. Judson Herrick has tried to give an approximate idea of the potentialities of neuronal circuits: "Every neuron of the cerebral cortex is enmeshed in a tangle of very fine fibers of great complexity, some of which come from very remote parts. It is probably safe to say that the majority of cortical neurons are directly or indirectly connected with every cortical field. This is the anatomical basis of cortical associational processes. The interconnections of these associational fibers form an anatomical mechanism which permits, during a train of cortical associations, numbers of different functional combinations of cortical neurons that far surpass any figures ever suggested by the astronomers in measuring the distances of stars… It is the capacity for making this sort of combination and recombination of the nervous elements that determines the practical value of the system… If a million cortical nerve cells were connected one with another in groups of only two neurons each in all possible combinations, the number of different patterns of interneuronic connection thus provided would be expressed by $10^{2,783,000}$… On the basis of the known structure of the cortex, … the number of intercellular connections that are anatomically present and available for use in a short series of cortical neurons of the visual area simultaneously excited by the retinal image … would far exceed the $10^{2,783,000}$ already mentioned as the theoretically possible combinations in groups of two only." (C. J. Herrick, 1928.) For comparative purposes Livingston adds: "Recall that the number of atoms in the universe is estimated to be about 10^{66}."

[7]This distinction between the two kinds of drives corresponds essentially to the one made by Marx. He spoke of two kinds of human drives and appetites: the "*constant,*" or fixed ones—such as hunger or sexual drive—which are an integral part of human nature and can be changed only in their form and in the direction they take in various cultures, and the "*relative appetites,*" which "owe their origin to certain social structures and certain conditions of production and communication." (K. Marx

and F. Engels, MEGA, vol. 5. My translation.) He spoke of some of these appetites as “inhuman,” “depraved,” “unnatural,” and “imaginary.”

[8]The material in the following pages is an expansion of the discussion of the same subject (E. Fromm, 1947a and 1955a); to avoid repetition as much as possible, I have given only a shortened version of the older material.

[9]The term “transcendence” is traditionally used in a theological frame of reference. Christian thinking takes for granted that man’s transcendence implies transcendence beyond himself to God; thus theology tries to prove the need for belief in God by pointing to man’s need for transcendence. This logic, however, is faulty unless the concept of God is used in a purely symbolic sense standing for “not-self.” There is a need to transcend one’s self-centered, narcissistic, isolated position to one of being related to others, of openness to the world, escaping the hell of self-centeredness and hence self-imprisonment. Religious systems like Buddhism have postulated this kind of transcendence without any reference to a god or superhuman power; so did Meister Eckhart, in his boldest formulations.

[10]It is one of Freud’s achievements to have discovered the depth of the fixation to mother as the central problem of normal and pathological development (the “Oedipus complex”). But he was forced by his own philosophical premises to interpret this fixation as a sexual one, and he thus narrowed the importance of his discovery. Only toward the end of his life did he begin to see that there was also a pre-Oedipal attachment to mother. But he could not go beyond these more marginal remarks and did not revise the old concept of “incest.” A few analysts, especially S. Ferenczi and his students, and more recently J. Bowlby (1958 and 1969), have seen the real nature of the fixation to mother. Recent experiments with primates (H. R. Harlow, J. L. McGaugh, and R. F. Thompson, 1971) and with infants (R. Spitz and G. Cobliner, 1965) have clearly demonstrated the supreme importance of the tie to mother. The analytic data unearthed show what role the nonsexual incestuous strivings play in the life of both the normal and the neurotic person. Since I have stressed this point in my work for many years, I shall quote here only the last treatment of it in *The Sane Society* (1955a) and in *The Heart of Man* (1964a). Cf. on symbiosis E. Fromm (1941a, 1955a, 1964a); also M. S. Mahler (1968), based on her earlier papers since 1951.

[11]Also, D. E. Schecter, personal communication.

[12]In order to avoid misunderstanding, I should like to emphasize that one cannot isolate a single factor (a prohibition) from the total interpersonal situation of which it is a part. If the prohibition occurs in a non oppressive situation, it will not have the consequences it has in which it serves to break the child’s will.

[13]I am indebted to Dr. R. G. Heath for having shown me some of these “catatonic” monkeys in the Department of Psychiatry, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

[14]I am indebted to Dr. D. E. Schecter for allowing me to read his paper in manuscript.

[15]Cf. the series of papers by W. H. Bexton et al. (1954), W. Heron el al. (1956), T. H. Scott et al. (1959), and B. K. Doane et al. (1959).

[16]The idea that they showed quasi-psychotic reactions rests, in my opinion, on an erroneous interpretation of the data.

[17]Cf. A. Burton (1967), who calls depression the “illness of our society,” and W. Heron (1957). I have pointed to the significance of boredom as pervading our society and to its aggression-producing function in *The Revolution of Hope* (1968a) as well as in my earlier writings.

[18]This dream and the comments were reported to me by a student whose work I supervised years ago.

[19]Dr. H. D. Esler, personal communication.

[20]I am indebted to Dr. R. G. Heath for very stimulating personal communications concerning patients suffering from extreme forms of boredom as well as for giving me the opportunity to interview two of these patients. Cf. also R. G. Heath (1964).

[21]Much of the following is based on personal communications with Dr. H. D. Esler, who will publish his material in a forthcoming book.

[22]Sudden outbursts of violence may be caused by brain disease, such as tumors, and such cases have, of course, nothing to do with depressive-bored states.

[23]I do not mean to imply that animals have no character. Undoubtedly they have their individuality, which is familiar to anyone who knows a species of animals well. But it must he considered that this individuality is to some extent one of temperament, a genetically given disposition, and not an acquired trait. Furthermore, the question, Have animals character or not? is as little fruitful as the old question, Have animals intelligence or not? It is to be assumed that the more an animal is instinctively determined, the less can we find elements of character and vice versa.

[24]He adds that mammals and many other forms of life could not survive a single generation without built-in cooperative behavior, thus confirming P. Kropotkin’s findings in his famous book *Mutual Aid* (1955).

[25]Shared experience is specifically the basis of all psychological understanding; the understanding of the unconscious of another person presupposes that we understand the other because we have access to our own unconscious and thus can share his experience. Cf. E. Fromm, D. T. Suzuki, and R. de Martino (1960a).

[26]The outstanding exception to the conventional environmentalist view is that of Marx, even though vulgar Marxism in its Stalinist or reformist version has done everything to obscure this. Marx proposed a concept of "human nature in general" as distinct from "human nature as modified in each historical epoch." (K. Marx, 1906.) For him certain social conditions, such as capitalism, produce a "crippled" man. Socialism, as he conceived it, will be conducive to the full self-realization of man.

[27]Cf. E. Fromm (1955a).

[28]Cf. the brilliant critique of the social sciences by S. Andreski (1972).

[29]This is the crucial point in which Sartre has never truly understood or integrated Marx's thought, trying to combine essentially voluntaristic theory with Marx's theory of history. Cf. the excellent critique of Sartre by R. Dunayevskaya. (Forthcoming.)

[30]Although this use of rational is not customary philosophic terminology today, it has its basis in Western tradition. For Heraclitus logos (of which the Latin *ratio* in a translation) is an underlying organizational principle of the universe, related to the common meaning in his time of the logos as a "proportion." (W. K. Guthrie, 1962.) Also in Heraclitus, to follow the logos is "to be awake." Aristotle uses logos as reason in an ethical context *(Ethics Nicomachea*, V. 1134a) and frequently in the combination "right reason." Thomas Aquinas speaks of "rational appetite" *(appetitus rationales)* and distinguishes between reason concerned with action and deed, and reason concerned solely with knowledge. Spinoza speaks of rational and irrational affects. Pascal of emotional reasoning. For Kant practical reason *(Vernunft)* has the function of recognizing what *should be done*, while theoretical reason makes one recognize *what* is. Cf. also Hegel's use of rationality in reference to emotions. Finally, I want to mention in this brief survey Whitehead's statement that "the function of reason is to promote the art of life." (A. N. Whitehead, 1967.)

[31]This problem has been much obscured by the Freudian scheme of Id-Ego-Superego. This division has forced psychoanalytic theory to consider as belonging to the ego all that does not belong to the id or super ego, and this simplistic (although often very sophisticated) approach has blocked the analysis of the problem of rationality.

[32]Man is never so determined that a basic change, stimulated by a number of possible events and experiences, is not possible at some period of his life. His potential for life affirmation is never completely dead, and one can never predict that it will not emerge. This is the reason genuine conversion (repentance) can occur. To prove this thesis would require a book by itself. I shall refer here only to the ample material on profound changes that can occur in psychoanalytic therapy and the many changes that occur "spontaneously." The most impressive proof for the fact that environment inclines, but does not determine is offered by the historical record. Even in the most vicious societies there are always outstanding personalities who embody the highest form of human existence. Some of them have been spokesmen for humanity, "saviors," without whom man might have lost the vision of his goal; others remained unknown. They were the ones to whom the Jewish legend refers as the thirty-six just men in each generation, whose existence guarantees the survival of mankind.

[33]This picture needs to be qualified even with regard to animals that have needs beyond their physiological survival-for instance, the need to play.

[34]Of course animal infants need "love," too, and its quality may differ little from that needed by human infants. But it differs from non-narcissistic human love which is referred to here.

[35]In order to appreciate this distinction properly one must remember that what a person *calls* sacred is not necessarily so. Today for instance, the concepts and symbols of Christianity are held to be sacred, although they no longer elicit a passionate involvement for most church-goers; on the other hand, the striving for the conquest of nature, for fame, power, and money, which are the real objects of devotion, are not called sacred because they have not been integrated into an explicit religious system. Only exceptionally, when one has spoken of "sacred egoism" (in a national sense) or "sacred revenge" has this been different in modern times.

11. Malignant Aggression: Cruelty and Destructiveness

Apparent Destructiveness

VERY DIFFERENT FROM destructiveness are certain deeply buried archaic experiences that often appear to the modern observer as proofs for man's innate destructive acts. Yet a closer analysis can show that while they result in destructive acts, their motivation is not the passion to destroy.

One example is the passion to spill blood, often called "blood lust." For all practical purposes, to shed a person's blood means to kill him, and thus "killing" and "shedding blood" are synonyms. Yet the question arises whether there may not be an archaic pleasure in shedding blood that is different from the pleasure in killing.

At a deep, archaic level of experience, blood is a very peculiar substance. Quite generally, it has been equated with life and the life-force, and is one of the three sacred substances that emanate from the body. The other two are semen and milk. Semen expresses male, while milk expresses female and motherly creativity, and both were considered sacred in many cults and rituals. Blood transcends the difference between male and female. In the deepest layers of experience, one magically seizes upon the life-force itself by shedding blood.

The use of blood for religious purposes is well known. The priests of the Hebrew temple spread blood from the slaughtered animals as part of the service; the Aztec priests offered their gods the still-palpitating hearts of their victims. In many ritual customs brotherhood is confirmed symbolically by mixing together the blood of the persons involved.

Since blood is the "juice of life," drinking blood is experienced in many instances as enhancing one's own life energy. In the orgies of Bacchus as well as in the rituals related to Ceres, one part of the mystery consisted of eating the raw flesh of the animal together with the blood. In the Dionysian festivals in Crete they used to tear the flesh off the living animal with their teeth. Such rituals are also to be found in relation to many

Chthonic gods and goddesses. (J. Bryant, 1775.) J. G. Bourke mentions that the Aryans who invaded India held the native Dasyu Indians in contempt because they ate uncooked human and animal flesh, and they expressed their natural disgust by calling them "raw eaters."[1] Very closely related to this drinking of blood and eating of raw meat are customs reported from still-existing primitive tribes. At certain religious ceremonies it is the duty of the Hamatsa Indians of Northwest Canada to bite a piece of the arm, leg, or breast of a man.[2] That the drinking of blood is considered health-giving can even be seen in recent times. It was a Bulgarian custom to give a man who has been badly frightened the quivering heart of a dove slaughtered at that moment, to aid him in recovering from his fright. (J. G. Bourke, 1913.) Even in as highly developed a religion as Roman Catholicism we find the archaic practice of drinking wine after it has been consecrated as Christ's blood; and it would be a reductionist distortion to assume that this ritual is the expression of destructive impulses, rather than an affirmation of life and an expression of community,

To modern man the shedding of blood appears to be nothing but destructiveness. Certainly from a "realistic" standpoint that is what it is, but if one considers not only the act itself but its meaning in the deepest and most archaic layers of experience, then one may arrive at a different conclusion. By shedding one's own blood or that of another, one is in touch with the life-force; this in itself can be an intoxicating experience on the archaic level, and when it is offered to the gods, it can be an act of the most sacred devotion; the wish to destroy need not be the motive.

Similar considerations apply also to the phenomenon of cannibalism. Those who argue in favor of man's innate destructiveness have often used cannibalism as a major argument to prove their theory. They point to the fact that in the Choukoutien caves skulls were found from which the brains had been extracted through the base. It was speculated that this was done in order to eat the brain, whose taste the killers allegedly liked. That is, of course, a possibility, although one that corresponds perhaps more to the view of the modern consumer. A more likely explanation is that the brain was used for magic-ritualistic purposes. As indicated earlier, this position has been taken by A. C. Blanc (1961), who found a strong similarity between the Peking Man skulls and those found in Monte Circeo dating almost half a million years later. If this interpretation is correct, the same

holds true for ritualistic cannibalism and ritualistic drinking and shedding of blood.

To be sure, non ritualistic cannibalism was a common practice among "primitive" people in the last centuries. From all we know about the character of the hunter-food-gatherers still living today, or can assume about the prehistoric ones, they were not killers, and it is very unlikely that they were cannibals. As Mumford puts it succinctly: "Just as primitive man was incapable of our own massive exhibitions of cruelty, torture and extermination, so he may have been quite innocent of manslaughter for food." (L. Mumford, 1967.)

The foregoing remarks are meant as a warning against the hasty interpretation of all destructive behavior as the outcome of a destructive instinct, rather than to recognize the frequency of religious and nondestructive motivations behind such behavior. They were not intended to minimize the outbursts of real cruelty and destructiveness to which we now turn.

Spontaneous Forms

Destructiveness[3] appears in two forms: spontaneous, and hound in the character structure. By the former I refer to the outburst of dormant (not necessarily repressed) destructive impulses that are activated by extraordinary circumstances, in contrast to the permanent, although not always expressed, presence of destructive traits in the character.

The Historical Record

The most ample—and horrifying—documentation for seemingly spontaneous forms of destructiveness are on the record of civilized history. The history of war is a report of ruthless and indiscriminate killing and torture, whose victims were men, women, and children. Many of these occurrences give the impression of orgies of destruction, in which neither conventional nor genuinely moral factors had any inhibitory effect. Killing was still the mildest manifestation of destructiveness. But the orgies did not stop here: men were castrated, women were disemboweled, prisoners were crucified or thrown before the lions. There is hardly a destructive act human imagination could think of that has not been acted out again and again. We

have witnessed the same frenzied mutual killing of hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Moslems in India during the partition, and in Indonesia in the anti-Communist purge in 1965, where, according to varying sources, from four hundred thousand to a million real or alleged Communists, together with many Chinese were slaughtered. (M. Caldwell, 1968.) I need not go further in giving a more detailed description of the manifestations of human destructiveness: they are well known and, besides, often quoted by those who want to prove that destructiveness is innate, as for instance D. Freeman (1964).

As to the causes of destructiveness, they will be dealt with when we shall discuss sadism and necrophilia. I mentioned these outbursts here in order to give examples for destructiveness that is not bound in the character structure, as is the case with the sadistic and necrophilous character. But these destructive explosions are not spontaneous in the sense that they break out without any reason. In the first place, there are always external conditions that stimulate them, such as wars, religious or political conflicts, poverty, extreme boredom and insignificance of the individual. Secondly, there are subjective reasons: extreme group narcissism in national or religious terms, as in India, a certain proneness to a state of trance, as in parts of Indonesia. It is not human nature that makes a sudden appearance, but the destructive potential that is fostered by certain permanent conditions and mobilized by sudden traumatic events. Without these provoking factors, the destructive energies in these populations seem to be dormant, and not as with the destructive *character*, a constantly flowing source of energy.

Vengeful Destructiveness

Vengeful destructiveness is a spontaneous reaction to intense and unjustified suffering inflicted upon a person or the members of the group with whom he is identified. It differs from normal defensive aggression in two ways: (1) It occurs *after* the damage has been done, and hence is not a defense against a *threatening* danger. (2) It is of much greater intensity, and is often cruel, lustful, and insatiable. Language itself expresses this particular quality of vengeance in the term “thirst for vengeance.”

It hardly needs to be emphasized how widespread vengeful aggression is, both among individuals and groups. We find it in the form of blood revenge as an institution practically all over the world: East and Northeast

Africa, the Upper Congo, West Africa, among many frontier tribes in northeast India, Bengal. New Guinea, Polynesia, in Corsica (until recently), and it was widespread among the North American aborigines. (M. R. Davie, 1929.) Blood revenge is a sacred duty that falls upon the member of a family, clan, or tribe who has to kill a member of the corresponding unit if one of his people has been killed. In contrast to simple punishment, where the crime is expiated by the punishment of the murderer or those to whom he belongs, in the case of blood revenge the punishment of the aggressor does not end the sequence. The punitive killing represents a new killing which in turn obliges the members of the punished group to punish the punisher and so on ad infinitum. Theoretically, blood revenge is an endless chain, and in fact it sometimes leads to the extinction of families or larger groups. One even finds blood revenge—although as an exception—among very peaceful populations like the Greenlanders, who do not know the meaning of war, although as Davie writes: “The practice is but slightly developed and the duty does not as a rule seem to weigh heavily upon the survivors.” (M. R. Davie, 1929.)

Not only blood revenge but all forms of punishment—from primitive to modern—are an expression of vengeance. (K. A. Menninger, 1968.) The classic example is the *lex talionis* of the Old Testament. The threat to punish a misdeed up to the third and fourth generation must also be considered an expression of revenge by a god whose commands have been disobeyed, even though it seems that the attempt was to weaken the traditional concept by adding “keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving inequity, transgressions and sin.” The same idea can be found in many primitive societies—for instance, in the law of the Yakuts which says “The blood of a man, if spilled, requires atonement.” Among the Yakuts the children of the murdered took vengeance on the children of the murderer to the ninth generation. (M. R. Davie, 1929.)

It cannot be denied that blood vengeance and criminal law, bad as they are, also have a certain social function in upholding social stability. The full power of the lust for vengeance can be seen in those instances where this function is lacking. Thus a large number of Germans were motivated by the wish for revenge because of the loss of the war in 1914-1918, or more specifically because of the injustice of the Versailles peace treaty in its material conditions, and particularly in its demand that the German government should accept sole responsibility for the outbreak of the war. It

is notorious that real or alleged atrocities can ignite the most intense rage and vengefulness. Hitler made the alleged mistreatment of the German minorities in Czechoslovakia the center of the propaganda before he attacked the country; the wholesale massacre in Indonesia in 1965 was initially inflamed by the story of the mutilation of some generals who were opposed to Sukarno. One example of thirst for revenge that has lasted almost two thousand years is the reaction to the execution of Jesus allegedly by the Jews; the cry "Christ-killers," has traditionally been one of the major sources of violent anti-Semitism.

Why is vengeance such a deep-seated and intense passion? I can only offer some speculations. Let us consider first the idea that vengeance is in some sense a magic act. By destroying the one who committed the atrocity his deed is magically undone. This is still expressed today by saying that through his punishment "the criminal has paid his debt"; at least in theory, he is like someone who never committed a crime. Vengeance may be said to be a magic reparation; but even assuming that this is so, why is this desire for reparation so intense? Perhaps man is endowed with an elementary sense of justice; this may be because there is a deep rooted sense of "existential equality": we all are born from mothers, we were once powerless children, and we shall all die.[4] Although man can often not defend himself against the harm others inflict upon him, in his wish for revenge he tries to wipe the sheet clean by denying, magically, that the damage was ever done. (It seems that envy[5] has the same root. Cain could not stand the fact that he was rejected while his brother was accepted. The rejection was arbitrary, and it was not in his power to change it; this fundamental injustice aroused such envy that the score could only be evened out by killing Abel.) But there must be more to the cause of vengeance. Man seems to take justice into his own hands when God or secular authorities fail, It is as if in his passion for vengeance he elevates himself to the role of God, and of the angels of vengeance. The act of vengeance may be his greatest hour just because of this self-elevation.

We can entertain some further speculations. Cruelties like physical mutilation, castration, and torture violate the minimal demands of conscience common to all men. Is the passion for vengeance against those who commit such inhuman acts mobilized by this elementary conscience? Or could it be, in addition, a defense against the awareness of one's own

destructiveness by the projective device: they—not I—are destructive and cruel?

Answers to these questions require further studies of the phenomenon of vengeance.

The considerations offered thus far, however, seem to support the view that the passion for vengeance is so deep-seated that one must think of it as being present in all men. Yet this assumption does not fit the facts. While it is indeed widespread, there are great differences in degree, up to the point that certain cultures[6] and individuals seem to have only minimal traces of it. There must be factors that explain the difference. One such factor is that of scarcity versus abundance. The person—or group—who has confidence in life and enjoys it, whose material resources may not be ample but sufficient not to elicit stinginess, will be less eager for the reparation of damage that an anxious, hoarding person who is afraid that he can never make up for his losses.

This much can be stated with some degree of probability: the thirst for revenge can be plotted on a line at one end of which are people in whom nothing will arouse a wish for revenge; these are men who have reached a degree of development which in Buddhist or Christian terms is the ideal for all men. On the other end would be those who have an anxious, hoarding, or extremely narcissistic character, for whom even a slight damage will arouse an intense craving for revenge. This type would be exemplified by a man from whom a thief has stolen a few dollars and who wants him to be severely punished; or a professor who has been slighted by a student and therefore writes a negative report on him when he is asked to recommend the student for a good job; or a customer who has been treated "wrongly" by a salesman and complains to the management, wanting the man to be fired. In these cases we are dealing with a character in which vengeance is a constantly present trait.

Ecstatic Destructiveness

Suffering from the awareness of his powerlessness and separateness, man can try to overcome his existential burden by achieving a trancelike state of ecstasy ("to be beside oneself") and thus to regain unity within himself and with nature. There are many ways to accomplish this. A very transitory one is provided by nature in the sexual act. This experience may

be said to be the natural prototype of complete concentration and momentary ecstasis; it may include the sexual partner but too often remains a narcissistic experience for each of the two, who perhaps share mutual gratitude for the pleasure they have given each other (conventionally felt as love).

We have already referred to other symbiotic, more lasting and intense ways to arrive at ecstasy. We find these in religious cults, such as ecstatic dance, the use of drugs, frenzied sexual orgies, or self-induced states of trance. An outstanding example of a self-induced state are the trance-producing ceremonies in Bali. They are particularly interesting in relation to the phenomenon of aggression because in one of the ceremonial dances[7] the participants use a *kris* (a special kind of dagger) with which they stab themselves (and occasionally each other) at the very height of the trance. (J. Below, 1960 and V. Monteil, 1970.)

There are other forms of ecstasis in which hate and destructiveness are the center of the experience. One example is the “going berserk” to be found among the Teutonic tribes (berserk means “bear shirt”). This was an initiation rite in which the male youth was induced into a state of identification with a bear. The initiated would attack people, trying to bite them, not speaking but simply making noises like a bear. To be in this trancelike state was the highest accomplishment of this ritual, and to have participated in it was the beginning of independent manhood. The expression *furor teutonicus* implies the sacred nature of this particular stage of rage. Several features in this ritual are worthy of note. First of all it is rage for the sake of rage, not directed against an enemy or provoked by any damage or insult. It aimed at a trancelike state which in this case is organized around the all-pervasive feeling of rage. It may be that the induction of this state was helped by drugs. (H. D. Fabing, 1956.) The unifying force of absolute rage was required as a means to arrive at the experience of ecstasis. Secondly, it is a collective state based on tradition, the guidance of shamans, and the effect of group participation. Thirdly, it is an attempt to regress to animal existence, in this case that of the bear; the initiates behave like a predatory animal. Ultimately, it is a transitory and not a chronic state of rage.

Another example of a ritual that has survived until today and that shows the state of trance organized around rage and destructiveness can be seen in a small Spanish town. Every year on a certain date the men get

together on the main square, each with a small or large drum. At exactly midday they begin to beat the drums and do not stop until twenty-four hours later. After a while they get into a state of frenzy that becomes a state of trance in the process of this continuous beating of the drums. After exactly twenty-four hours the ritual ends. The skin of many of the drums has been broken, the hands of the drummers are swollen and often bleeding. The most remarkable feature of this process is the faces of the participants: they are the faces of men in a trance and the expression they show is that of a frenzy of rage.[8] It is obvious that the beating of the drums gives expression to powerful destructive impulses. While the rhythm at the beginning of the ritual probably helped to stimulate the trancelike state, after a while each drummer is completely possessed by the passion to beat. This passion takes over completely, and only because of the strength of its intensity are the drummers capable of continuing for twenty-four hours in spite of their hurting hands and their increasingly exhausted bodies.

The Worship of Destructiveness

In many ways similar to ecstatic destructiveness is the chronic dedication of a person's whole life to hate and destructiveness. Not a momentary state as in ecstasis, it has nevertheless the function of taking hold of the whole person, of unifying him in the worship of one goal: to destroy. This state is a permanent idolatry of the god of destruction; his devotee has, as it were, given over his life to him.

Kern, von Salomon: A Clinical Case of Destruction Idolatry

An excellent example of this phenomenon can be found in the autobiographical novel by E. von Salomon (1930), one of the accessories to the murder in 1922 of W. Rathenau, the liberal and gifted German foreign minister.

Von Salomon was born in 1902, the son of a police officer, and was a military cadet when the German revolution broke out in 1918. He was filled with burning hate against the revolutionaries, but equally against the bourgeois middle class, which, he felt, was satisfied with the comforts of material existence and had lost the spirit of sacrifice and devotion to the nation. (He was at times in sympathy with the most radical wing of the left

revolutionaries because they, too, wanted to destroy the existing order.) Von Salomon made friends with a like-minded fanatical group of ex-officers, among them Kern who later killed Rathenau. He was eventually apprehended and sentenced to five years in prison.[9] Like his hero Kern, von Salomon may be considered a prototype of the Nazis, but in contrast to most of the latter, von Salomon and his group were men without opportunism or desire for even the comforts of life.

In his autobiographical novel, von Salomon says of himself: “I had always my special pleasure in destruction, thus I can feel in the midst of the daily pain an absorbing pleasure in seeing how the baggage of ideas and values has diminished, how the arsenal of idealisms has been ground piece by piece until nothing remained but a bundle of flesh with raw nerves; nerves that like taut strings rendered each tune vibrantly and doubly so in the thin air of isolation.”

Von Salomon had not always been as devoted to destruction as this sentence would make it appear. It seems that some of his friends, especially Kern who impressed him tremendously, had influenced him with their own more fanatical attitude. A very interesting discussion between von Salomon and Kern shows the latter’s dedication to absolute destructiveness and hate.

Von Salomon begins the conversation by saying: “I want power. I want an aim that fills my day, I want life totally with all the sweetness of this world. I want to know that the sacrifices are worth while.”

Kern answers him fiercely: “Damn it, stop your questions. Tell me, if you know it, a greater happiness, if it is happiness that you are greedy for, than the one we experience only by the violence by which we perish like dogs.”

A few pages later, Kern says: “I could not bear it if greatness could grow again out of the rubble of this time. We do not fight so that the nation is happy, we fight to force it into its line of fate. But if this man [Rathenau] gives the nation a face once more, if he can mobilize it once more to a will and to a form which died in the war, that I could not bear.”

In answering the question how he, as an Imperial officer, survived the day of the revolution, he says: “I did not survive it; I have, as honor commanded, put a bullet in my head on the 19th November 1918; I am dead, what lives in me is not me. I have not known an ‘I’ since that day… I died for the nation. So everything lives in me only for the nation. How could I bear it if it were different’ I do what I have to do, because I die

every day. Since what I do is given only to one power everything I do is rooted in this power. *This power wants destruction and I destroy*… I know that I shall be ground to nothing, that I shall fall when this power releases me." (Italics added.)

We see in Kern's statements the intense masochism by which he makes himself a willing subject of a higher power, but what is most interesting in this context is the unifying force of hate and the wish for destruction that this man worships, and for which he is willing to give his life without hesitation.

Whether it was the influence of Kern's suicide before he could be arrested or the political failure of his ideas, it seems that in von Salomon the hope for power and its sweetness gave way to absolute hate and bitterness. In prison he felt so lonely that he could not bear it if the director tried to approach him "with human concern." He could not bear the questions of his fellow prisoners in the warmth of the first spring days. "I crawled into my cell which was hostile to me—I hated the guard who opened the door and the man who brought me the soup and the dogs that played in front of the window. *I was afraid of joy."* (Italics added). He then describes how angry the tree in the courtyard made him when it began to flower. He reports about his response to the third Christmas in prison when the director tried to make the day pleasant for the prisoners in order to help them to forget:

> But I, I do not want to forget. May I be damned if I forget. I want to visualize always every day and every hour of the past. This creates a potent hate. I do not want to forget any humiliation, any slighting, any arrogant gesture, I want to think of every meanness done to me, every word that caused me pain and was meant to cause pain. I want to remember every face and every experience and every enemy. *I want to load my whole life with the whole disgusting dirt, with this piled-up mass of disgusting memories*. I do not want to forget: *but the little good that happened to me, that I want to forget*. (Italics added.)

In a certain sense von Salomon, Kern, and their small circle might be considered revolutionaries; they wanted the total destruction of the existing social and political structure and its replacement by a nationalistic, militaristic order—of which they had hardly any concrete idea. But a revolutionary in a characterological sense is not characterized only by the

wish to overthrow the old order; unless he is motivated by love of life and freedom, he is a destructive rebel. (This holds true also for those who participate in a genuine revolutionary movement, but are motivated by destructiveness.) If we analyze the psychic reality of these men, we find that they were destroyers and not revolutionaries. They hated not only their enemies, they hated life itself. This becomes very clear in Kern's statement and in von Salomon's description of his reaction to the men in prison, to trees, and to animals. He felt utterly unrelated and unresponsive to anybody or anything alive.

The peculiarity of this attitude is particularly striking if one thinks of the attitude of many genuine revolutionaries in their private lives, and particularly in prison. One is reminded of Rosa Luxemburg's famous letters from prison in which she describes with poetic tenderness the bird she can observe from her cell, letters in which no trace of bitterness is to be found. But one need not think only of an extraordinary person like Rosa Luxemburg. There were, and are, thousands upon thousands of revolutionaries in prison all over the world in whom the love of all that is alive never diminished during their years in prison.

In order to understand why persons like Kern and von Salomon sought fulfillment in hate and destruction we would have to know more about their life history; such knowledge is not available, and we must be satisfied in knowing about *one* condition for their worship of hate. The whole world had broken down, morally and socially. Their values of nationalism, their feudal concept of honor and obedience, these things had lost their foundation in the defeat of the monarchy. (Although in the last analysis it was not the military defeat by the Allies, but the victorious march of capitalism within Germany that destroyed their semifeudal world.) What they had learned as officers was now useless, although fourteen years later their professional chances would have been excellent. Their thirst for revenge, the meaninglessness of their present existence, their social uprootedness, go far to explain their worship of hate. But we do not know to that extent their destructiveness was the expression of a character structure already formed many years before the First World War. This seems more likely to have been the case with Kern, while I assume that von Salomon's attitude was perhaps more transitional and strongly induced by Kern's impressive personality. It seems that Kern really belongs to the later

discussion of the necrophilous character. I have included him here because he offers a good example of the idolatrous worship of hate.

One further observation may be relevant for these as well as for many other instances of destructiveness, especially among groups. I refer to the "triggering" effect of destructive behavior. A person may first react with defensive aggression against a threat; by this behavior he has shed some of the conventional inhibitions to aggressive behavior. This makes it easier for other kinds of aggressiveness, such as destruction and cruelty, to be unleashed. This may lead to a kind of chain reaction in which destructiveness becomes so intense that when a "critical mass" is reached, the result is a state of ecstasis in a person, and particularly in a group.

The Destructive Character: Sadism

The phenomenon of spontaneous, transitory outbursts of destructiveness has so many facets that a great deal of further study is necessary in order to arrive at a more definite understanding than is offered in the tentative suggestions in the previous pages. On the other hand, the data on destructiveness in its character-bound forms are richer and more definite; this is not surprising if we consider that they were gained from prolonged observations of individuals in psychoanalysis and daily-life observations, and furthermore, that the conditions that generate these forms of character are relatively stable and of long duration.

There are two conventional concepts of the nature of sadism, sometimes used separately, sometimes in combination.

One concept is expressed in the term "algolagnia" *(algos,* "pain"; *lagneia,* "lust") coined by von Schrenk-Notzing at the beginning of the century. He differentiated active algolagnia (sadism) from passive algolagnia (masochism). In this concept the essence of sadism is seen in the desire to inflict pain, regardless of any particular sexual involvement.[10]

The other concept sees sadism essentially as a sexual phenomenon—in Freud's terms, as a partial drive of the libido (in the first stage of his thinking)—and explains sadistic desires that have no overt connection with sexual strivings as being unconsciously motivated by them. A great deal of psychoanalytic ingenuity has been deployed to prove that the libido is the driving force of cruelty, even when the naked eye could not discover such sexual motivations.

This is not to deny that sexual sadism, together with masochism, is one of the most frequent and best-known sexual perversions. For men afflicted with this perversion it is a condition for sexual excitation and release. It ranges from the wish to cause physical pain to a woman—for instance, by beating her—to humiliating her, putting her in chains, or forcing her complete obedience in other ways. Sometimes the sadist needs to inflict intense pain and suffering in order to be sexually aroused: sometimes a small dose will have the desired effect. Many times a sadistic phantasy is sufficient to arouse sexual excitement, and there is no small number of men who have normal sexual intercourse with their wives, but unknown to their partner, need a sadistic phantasy to become sexually excited. In sexual masochism the procedure is reversed: the excitement lies in being beaten, abused, hurt. Both sadism and masochism as sexual perversions are to be found frequently among men. It would seem that sexual sadism is more frequent among men than among women, at least in our culture; whether masochism is more frequent among women is difficult to ascertain because of lack of reliable data on the subject.

Before starting the discussion of sadism, some comments seem appropriate on the question whether it is a perversion and, if so, in what sense.

It has become quite fashionable among some politically radical thinkers, such as Herbert Marcuse, to praise sadism as one of the expressions of human sexual freedom. Marquis de Sade's writings are reprinted by politically radical journals as manifestations of this "freedom." They accept de Sade's argument that sadism is a human desire, and that liberty requires that men have the right to satisfy their sadistic and masochistic desires, like all others, if this gives them pleasure.

The problem is quite complex. If one defines as perversion—as has been done—any sexual practice that does not lead to the procreation of children, i.e., which only serves sexual pleasure, then of course all those who are opposed to this traditional attitude will arise—and justly so—in the defense of "perversions." However, this is by no means the only definition of perversion, and in fact, it is a rather old-fashioned one.

Sexual desire, even when no love is present, is an expression of life and of mutual giving and sharing of pleasure. Sexual acts, however, that are characterized by the fact that one person becomes the object of the other's contempt, of his wish to hurt, his desire to control are the only true sexual

perversions: not because they do not serve procreation, but because they pervert a life-serving impulse into a life-strangling one.

If one compares sadism with a form of sexual behavior that has often been called perversion—i.e., all kinds of oral-genital contact—the difference becomes quite apparent. The latter behavior is as little a perversion as kissing, because it does not imply control, or humiliation of another person.

The argument that to follow one's desires is man's natural right and hence to be respected is very understandable from a rationalistic, pre-Freudian viewpoint, which assumed that man desires only what is good for him, and therefore that pleasure is a guide for desirable action. But after Freud this argument sounds rather stale. We know that many of man's desires are irrational, precisely because they harm him (if not others) and interfere with his development. The person who is motivated by the wish to destroy and who feels pleasure in the act of destruction could hardly present the excuse that he has the right to behave destructively because this is his desire and his source of pleasure. The defenders of the sadistic perversion may answer that they are not arguing in favor of the satisfaction of destructive, murderous wishes; that sadism is just one of the many manifestations of sexuality, "a matter of taste," and no worse than any other form of sexual satisfaction.

This argument overlooks the most important point in the matter: the person who is sexually aroused by sadistic practices has a sadistic *character*—i.e., he *is* a sadist, a person with an intense desire to control, hurt, humiliate another person. The intensity of his sadistic desires affects his sexual impulses; this is not different from the fact that other nonsexual motivations, such as attraction to power, to wealth, or narcissism can arouse sexual desire. In fact, in no sphere of behavior does the character of a person show more clearly than in the sexual act—precisely because it is the least "learned" and patterned behavior. A person's love, his tenderness, his sadism or masochism, his greed, his narcissism, his anxieties—indeed, his every character trait—is expressed in his sexual behavior.

Sometimes the argument is presented that sadistic perversion is wholesome because it provides an innocent outlet for the sadistic tendencies inherent in all people. According to the logic of this argument Hitler's concentration camp guards would have been kind to the prisoners if they could have released their sadistic tendencies in their sexual relations.

Examples of *Sexual Sadism-Masochism*

The following examples of sexual sadism and masochism are from *The Story of O* by Pauline Réage (1965), a book that is somewhat less read than de Sade's classics.

> She rang. Pierre chained her hands above her head, to the chain of the bed. When she was thus bound, her lover kissed her again, standing beside her on the bed. Again he told her that he loved her, then he got off the bed and nodded for Pierre. He watched her struggle, so fruitlessly; he listened to her moans swell and become cries. When her tears flowed, he sent Pierre away. She still found the strength to tell him again that she loved him. Then he kissed her drenched face, her gasping mouth, undid her bonds, laid her down, and left. (P. Réage, 1965.)

O must have no will of her own; the lover and his friends must be in complete control of her; she finds her happiness in slavery and they in the role of absolute masters. The following extract gives a picture of this aspect of sadomasochistic performance. (It must be explained that one of the conditions of her lover's control is that she must submit to his friends as obediently as she does to him. One of them is Sir Stephen.)

> Finally she straightened up and, as though what she was going to say was stifling her, unfastened the top hooks of her tunic, until the cleavage of her breasts was visible. Then she stood up. Her hands and her knees were shaking.
>
> "I'm yours," she said at length to René. "I'll be whatever you want me to be."
>
> "No," he broke in, "ours. Repeat after me: I belong to both of you. I shall be whatever both of you want me to be."
>
> Sir Stephen's piercing gray eyes were fixed firmly upon her, as were René's, and in them she was lost, slowly repeating after him the phrases he was dictating to her, but like a lesson of grammar, she was transposing them into the first person.
>
> "To Sir Stephen and to me you grant the right…" The right to dispose of her body however they wished, in whatever place or manner

> they should choose, the right to keep her in chains, the right to whip her like a slave or prisoner for the slightest failing or infraction, or simply for their pleasure, the right to pay no heed to her pleas and cries, if they should make her cry out. (P. Réage, 1965.)

Sadism (and masochism) as sexual perversions constitute only a fraction of the vast amount of sadism in which no sexual behavior is involved. Nonsexual sadistic behavior, aiming at the infliction of *physical* pain up to the extreme of death, has as its object a powerless being, whether man or animal. Prisoners of war, slaves, defeated enemies, children, sick people (especially the mentally sick), inmates of prisons, nonwhites without weapons, dogs—they all have been the object of physical sadism, often including the most cruel torture. From the cruel spectacles in Rome to modern police units, torture has been used tinder the disguise of religious or political purposes, and sometimes plainly for the amusement of the impoverished masses. The Colosseum in Rome is indeed one of the greatest monuments to human sadism.

One of the most widespread manifestations of nonsexual sadism is the abuse of children. This form of sadism has become more widely known only in the last ten years by a number of investigations starting with the now classic work of C. H. Kempe *et al.* (1962). Since then a number of other papers have been published,[11] and further studies are underway on a national scale. They show that the abuse of children ranges from inflicting death by severe beating or intentional starvation to inflicting swellings and other nonfatal wounds. About the real incidence of such acts we really know next to nothing, since the available data come from public sources (police, for instance, called in by neighbors, and hospitals), but it is agreed that the number of reported cases is only a fraction of the whole. It seems that the most adequate data are those reported by Gill on the nationwide findings of a survey. I shall mention only one of these data: The ages at which children are mistreated can be divided into several periods: (1) from age one to age two; (2) the incidence doubles from age three to age nine; (3) from age nine to age fifteen the incidence decreases again to approximately the early level and gradually disappears after age sixteen. (D. G. Gill, 1970.) This means that sadism is most intense when the child is still helpless, but is beginning to have a will of its own and to react against the adult’s wish to control him completely.

Mental cruelty, the wish to humiliate and to hurt another person's feelings, is probably even more widespread than physical sadism. This type of sadistic attack is much safer for the sadist; after all, no physical force but "only" words have been used. On the other hand, the psychic pain can be as intense or even more so than the physical. I do not need to give examples for this mental sadism. Parents inflict it upon their children, professors on their students, superiors on their inferiors—in other words, it is employed in any situation where there is someone who cannot defend himself against the sadist. (If the teacher is helpless, the students often turn into sadists.) Mental sadism may be disguised in many seemingly harmless ways: a question, a smile, a confusing remark. Who does not know an "artist" in this kind of sadism, the one who finds just the right word or the right gesture to embarrass or humiliate another in this innocent way. Naturally, this kind of sadism is often all the more effective if the humiliation is inflicted in front of others.[12]

Joseph Stalin: A Clinical Case of Nonsexual Sadism

One of the outstanding historical examples of both mental and physical sadism was Stalin. His behavior is a textbook description of nonsexual, as de Sade's novels are of sexual sadism. It was he who was the first to order the torture of political prisoners since the beginning of the revolution, a measure that up to the time of his giving this order had been shunned by the Russian revolutionaries. (R. A. Medvedev, 1971.)[13] Under Stalin the methods of torture used by the NKVD surpassed in refinement and cruelty anything that the czarist police had thought of. Sometimes he personally gave orders about what kind of torture was to be used on a prisoner. He mainly practiced mental sadism, of which I want to give a few illustrations. One particular form Stalin enjoyed was to assure people that they were safe, only to arrest them a day or two later. Of course, the arrest hit the victim all the more severely because he had felt especially safe; besides that, Stalin could enjoy the sadistic pleasure of knowing the man's real fate at the same time that he was assuring him of his favor. What greater superiority and control over another person is there?

Here are some specific examples reported by Medvedev:

Shortly before the arrest of the Civil War hero D. F. Serdich, Stalin toasted him at a reception, suggesting that they drink to "Brüderschaft." lust a few days before Bliukher's destruction, Stalin spoke of him warmly at a meeting. When an Armenian delegation came to him, Stalin asked about the poet Charents and said he should not be touched, but a few months later Charents was arrested and killed. The wife of Ordzhonikidze's Deputy Commissar, A. Serebrovskii, told about an unexpected phone call from Stalin one evening in 1937. "I hear you are going about on foot," Stalin said. "That's no good. People might think what they shouldn't. I'll send you a car if yours is being repaired." And the next morning a car from the Kremlin garage arrived for Mrs. Serebrovskii's use. But two days later her husband was arrested, taken right from the hospital.

The famous historian and publicist I. Steklov, disturbed by all the arrests, phoned Stalin and asked for an appointment. "Of course, come on over," Stalin said, and reassured him when they met: "What's the matter with you? The Party knows and trusts you; you have nothing to worry about." Steklov returned home to his friends and family, and that very evening the NKVD came for him. Naturally the first thought of his friends and family was to appeal to Stalin, who seemed unaware of what was going on. It was much easier to believe in Stalin's ignorance than in subtle perfidy. In 1938 I. A. Akulov, onetime Procurator of the USSR and later Secretary of the Central Executive Committee, fell while skating and suffered an almost fatal concussion. On Stalin's suggestion, outstanding surgeons were brought from abroad to save his life. After a long and difficult recovery, Akulov returned to work, whereupon he was arrested and shot.

A particularly refined form of sadism was Stalin's habit of arresting the wives—and sometimes children—of some of the highest Soviet or Party functionaries and keeping them in a labor camp, while their husbands had to do their jobs and bow and scrape before Stalin without daring even to ask for their release. Thus the wife of Kalinin, the Soviet Union's President, was arrested in 1937,[14] Molotov's wife, and the wife and son of Otto Kuusinen, one of the leading Komintern functionaries, all were in work camps. An unnamed witness states that Stalin in his presence asked Kuusinen why he did not try to get his son freed. "Evidently there were

serious reasons for his arrest," Kuusinen answered. According to the witness, "Stalin grinned and ordered the release of Kuusinen's son." Kuusinen sent his wife parcels to her work camp, but did not even address them himself but had his housekeeper do it. Stalin had the wife of his private secretary arrested, while her husband remained in his position.

It does not require much imagination to visualize the extreme humiliation of these high functionaries who could not quit their positions, could not ask for the release of their wives or sons, and had to agree with Stalin that the arrest had been justified. Either such men had no feelings at all, or they were morally broken and had lost all self-respect and sense of dignity. A drastic example is the reaction of one of the most powerful figures in the Soviet Union, Lazar Kaganovich, to the arrest of his brother, Mikhail Moiseevich, who was Minister of the Aviation Industry before the war:

> He was a Stalinist, responsible for the repression of many people. But after the war he fell out of Stalin's favor. As a result, some arrested officials, who had allegedly set up an underground "fascist center," named Mikhail Kaganovich as an accomplice. They made the obviously inspired (and utterly preposterous) assertion that he (a Jew) was to be vice-president of the fascist government if the Hitlerites took Moscow. When Stalin learned of these depositions, which he obviously expected, he phoned Lazar Kaganovich and said that his brother would have to be arrested because he had connection with the fascists. "Well, so what?" said Lazar. "If it's necessary, arrest him!" At a Politburo discussion of this subject, Stalin praised Lazar Kaganovich for his "principles": he had agreed to his brother's arrest. But Stalin then added that the arrest should not be made hastily. Mikhail Moiseevich had been in the Party many years, Stalin said, and all the depositions should be checked once more. So Mikoyan was instructed to arrange a confrontation between M. M. and the person who had testified against him. The confrontation was held in Mikoyan's office. A man was brought in who repeated his testimony in Kaganovich's presence, adding that some airplane factories were deliberately built near the border before the war so that the Germans might capture them more easily. When Mikhail Kagonovich had heard the testimony, he

> asked permission to go to a little toilet adjoining Mikoyan's office. A few seconds later a shot was heard there.

Still another form of Stalin's sadism was the unpredictability of his behavior. There are cases of people whom he ordered to be arrested, but who after torture and severe sentences were released after a few month or years and appointed to high offices, often without explanation. A telling example is Stalin's behavior toward his old comrade, Sergei Ivanovich Kavtaradze,

> who had once helped him hide from detectives in St. Petersburg. In the twenties Kavtaradze joined the Trotskyite opposition, and left it only when the Trotskyite center called on its supporters to stop oppositional activity. After Kirov's murder, Kavtaradze, exiled to Kazan as an ex-Trotskyite, wrote a letter to Stalin saying that he was not working against the Party. Stalin immediately brought Kavtaradze back from exile. Soon many central newspapers carried an article by Kavtaradze recounting an incident of his underground work with Stalin. Stalin liked the article, but Kavtaradze did not write any more on this subject. He did not even rejoin the Party, and lived by doing very modest editorial work. At the end of 1936 he and his wife were suddenly arrested and, after torture, were sentenced to be shot. He was accused of planning, together with Budu Mdivani, to murder Stalin. Soon after sentencing, Mdivani was shot. Kavtaradze, however, was kept in the death cell for a long time. Then he was suddenly taken to Beria's office, where he met his wife, who had aged beyond recognition. Both were released. First he lived in a hotel; then he got two rooms in a communal apartment and started to work. Stalin began to show him various signs of favor, inviting him to dinner and once even paying him a surprise visit along with Beria. (This visit caused great excitement in the communal apartment. One of Kavtaradze's neighbors fainted when, in her words, "the portrait of Comrade Stalin" appeared on the threshold.) When he had Kavtaradze to dinner, Stalin himself would pour the soup, tell jokes, and reminisce. But during one of these dinners, Stalin suddenly went up to his guest and said, "And still you wanted to kill me."[15]

Stalin's behavior in this case shows particularly clearly one element in his character—the wish to show people that he had absolute power and control over them. By his word he could kill them, have them tortured, have them rescued again, have them rewarded; he had the power of God over life and death, the power of nature to make it grow and to destroy, to inflict pain and to heal. Life and death depended on his whim. This may also explain why he did not destroy some people like Litvinov (after the failure of his policy of understanding with the West), or Ehrenburg, who stood for everything Stalin hated, or Pasternak, who deviated in the opposite direction from Ehrenburg. Medvedev offers the explanation that in some cases he had to keep some old Bolsheviks alive to support the claim that he was continuing Lenin's work. But surely that could not have been said in Ehrenburg's case. I surmise that here, too, the motive was that Stalin enjoyed the sensation of control by whim and by mood, not restricted by any—even the most evil—principle.

The Nature of Sadism

I have given these examples of Stalin's sadism because they serve very well to introduce the central issue: *the nature of sadism.* Thus far we have dealt descriptively with various kinds of sadistic behavior, sexual, physical, and mental. These different forms of sadism are not independent from each other; the problem is to find the common element, the essence of sadism. Orthodox psychoanalysis claimed that a particular aspect of sexuality was common to all these forms; in the second phase of Freud's theory it was asserted that sadism was a blending of Eros (sexuality) and the death instinct, directed outside oneself, while masochism is a blend of eros and the death instinct, directed toward oneself.

Against this, I propose that the core of sadism, common to all its manifestations, is *the passion to have absolute and unrestricted control over a living being,* whether an animal, a child, a man, or a woman. To force someone to endure pain or humiliation without being able to defend himself is one of the manifestations of absolute control, but it is by no means the only one. The person who has complete control over another living being makes this being into his thing, his property, while he becomes the other being's god. Sometimes the control can even be helpful, and in that case we might speak of a benevolent sadism, such as one finds in instances where

one person rules another for the other's own good, and in fact furthers him in many ways, except that he keeps him in bondage. But most sadism is malevolent. Complete control over another human being means crippling him, choking him, thwarting him. Such control can have all forms and all degrees.

Albert Camus's play, *Caligula*, provides an example of an extreme type of sadistic control which amounts to a desire for omnipotence. We see how Caligula, brought by circumstances to a position of unlimited power, gets ever-more deeply involved in the craving for power. He sleeps with the wives of the senators and enjoys their humiliation when they have to act like admiring and fawning friends. He kills some of them, and those that remain still have to smile and joke. But even all this power does not satisfy him; he wants absolute power, he wants the impossible. As Camus has him say, "I want the moon."

It is easy enough to say that Caligula is mad, but his madness is a way of life; it is one solution of the problem of human existence, because it serves the illusion of omnipotence, of transcending the frontiers of human existence. In the process of trying to win absolute power Caligula lost all contact with men. He became an outcast by casting them out; he had to become mad because, when the bid for omnipotence failed, he was left a lonely, impotent individual.

The case of Caligula is of course exceptional. Few people ever have the chance to attain so much power that they can seduce themselves into the delusion that it might be absolute. But some have existed throughout history, up to our time; if they remain victorious, they are celebrated as great statesmen or generals; if they are defeated, they are considered madmen or criminals.

This extreme solution to the problem of human existence is barred to the average person. Yet in most social systems, including ours, even those on lower social levels can have control over somebody who is subject to their power. There are always children, wives, or dogs available; or there are helpless people, such as inmates of prisons, patients in hospitals, if they are not well-to-do (especially the mentally sick), pupils in schools, members of civilian bureaucracies. It depends on the social structure to what degree the factual power of superiors in each of these instances is controlled or restricted and, hence, how much possibility for sadistic satisfaction these situations offer. Aside from all these situations, religious

and racial minorities, as far as they are powerless, offer a vast opportunity for sadistic satisfaction for even the poorest member of the majority.

Sadism is one of the answers to the problem of being born human when better ones are not attainable. The experience of absolute control over another being, of omnipotence as far as he, she, or it is concerned, creates the illusion of transcending the limitations of human existence, particularly for one whose real life is deprived of productivity and joy. Sadism has essentially no practical aim; it is not "trivial" but "devotional." *!t is transformation of impotence into the experience of omnipotence;* it is the religion of psychical cripples.

However, not every situation where a person or a group has uncontrolled power over another generates sadism. Many—perhaps most—parents, prison guards, school teachers, and bureaucrats are not sadistic. For any number of reasons, the character structure of many individuals is not conducive to the development of sadism even under circumstances that offer an opportunity for it. Persons who have a dominantly life-furthering character, will not easily be seduced by power. But it would be a dangerous oversimplification if I were to classify people into only two groups: the sadist devils and the nonsadistic saints. What matters is the intensity of the sadistic passion within the character structure of a given person. There are many in whose characters sadistic elements can be found, but balanced by such strong life-furthering trends that they cannot be classified as sadistic characters. Not rarely in such individuals the internal conflict between the two orientations results in an enhanced sensitivity toward sadism and in the reactive formation of allergic reactions against all its forms. (Traces of their sadistic tendencies may still show up in unimportant, marginal behavior, slight enough to escape awareness.) There are others with a sadistic character in whom sadism is at least balanced by countervailing forces (not merely repressed), and while they may feel a certain amount of enjoyment in the control of helpless people, they would not participate in or get pleasure from actual torture and similar atrocities (except under extraordinary circumstances, such as mass frenzy). This can be demonstrated by the attitude of the Hitler regime toward the sadistic atrocities it ordered. It had to keep the extermination of Jews and of Polish and Russian civilians a close secret known only to a small group of the SS elite, but kept from the vast majority of the German population. In many speeches by Himmler and other executors of atrocities, it was stressed that

the killings must be done in a “humane” way, without sadistic excesses, since otherwise it would be too repugnant even to the SS men. In some instances orders were given that Russian and Polish civilians who were to be killed had to be put through a short, formal trial in order to give their executors the feeling that the shooting was “legal.” While all this sounds absurd in its hypocrisy, it is nevertheless a proof that the Nazi leaders believed that large-scale sadistic acts would be revolting to most otherwise loyal adherents of the regime. A great deal of material has come to light since 1945, but a systematic investigation of the degree to which Germans were attracted by sadistic acts—even though they avoided knowing about them—has not yet been made.

Sadistic character traits can never be understood if one isolates them from the whole character structure. They are part of a syndrome that has to be understood as a whole. For the sadistic character everything living is to be controllable; living beings become things. Or, still more accurately, living beings are transformed into living, quivering, pulsating objects of control. Their responses are forced by the one who controls them. The sadist wants to become the master of life, and hence the quality of life should be maintained in his victim. This is, in fact, what distinguishes him from the destroying person. The destroyer wants to do away with a person, to eliminate him, to destroy life itself; the sadist wants the sensation of controlling and choking life.

Another trait of the sadist is that he is stimulated only by the helpless, never by those who are strong. It does not cause any sadistic pleasure, for instance, to inflict a wound on an enemy in a fight between equals, because in this situation the infliction of the wound is not an expression of control. For the sadistic character there is only one admirable quality, and that is power. He admires, loves, and submits to those who have power, and he despises and wants to control those who are powerless and cannot fight back.

The sadistic character is afraid of everything that is not certain and predictable, that offers surprises which would force him to spontaneous and original reactions. For this reason, he is afraid of life. Life frightens him precisely because it is by its very nature unpredictable and uncertain. It is structured but it is not orderly; there is only one certainty in life: that all men die. Love is equally uncertain. To be loved requires a capacity to be loving oneself, to arouse love, and it implies always a risk of rejection and

failure. This is why the sadistic character can “love” only when he controls, i.e., when he has power *over* the object of his love. The sadistic character is usually xenophobic and neophobic—one who is strange constitutes newness, and what is new arouses fear, suspicion, and dislike, because a spontaneous, alive, and not-routinized response would be required.

Another element in the syndrome is the submissiveness and cowardice of the sadist. It may sound like a contradiction that the sadist is a submissive person, and yet not only is it not a contradiction—it is, dynamically speaking, a necessity. He is sadistic because he feels impotent, unalive, and powerless. He tries to compensate for this lack by having power over others, by transforming the worm he feels himself to be into a god. But even the sadist who has power suffers from his human impotence. He may kill and torture, but he remains a loveless, isolated, frightened person in need of a higher power to whom he can submit. For those one step below Hitler, the Fuhrer was his highest power; for Hitler himself, it was Fate, the laws of Evolution.

This need to submit is rooted in masochism. Sadism and masochism, which are invariably linked together, are opposites in behavioristic terms, but they are actually two different facets of one fundamental situation: the sense of vital impotence. Both the sadist and the masochist need another being to “complete” them, as it were. The sadist makes another being an extension of himself; the masochist makes himself the extension of another being. Both seek a symbiotic relationship because neither has his center in himself. While it appears that the sadist is free of his victim, he needs the victim in a perverse way.

Because of the close connection between sadism and masochism it is more: correct to speak of a sadomasochistic character, even though the one or the other aspect will be more dominant in a particular person. The sadomasochist has also been called the “authoritarian character,” translating the psychological aspect of his character structure into terms of a Political attitude. This concept finds its justification in the fact that persons whose political attitude is generally described as authoritarian (active and passive) usually exhibit (in our society) the traits of the sadomasochistic character: control of those below and submission to those above.[16]

The sadomasochistic character cannot be fully understood without reference to Freud’s concept of the “anal character,” enlarged by his disciples, especially by K. Abraham and Ernest Jones.

Freud (1908) believed that the anal character manifested itself in a *syndrome* of character traits: stubbornness, orderliness, and parsimony, to which punctuality and cleanliness were added later. He assumed that this syndrome was rooted in the "anal libido" that has its source in the anal erogenous zone. The character traits of the syndrome were explained as reaction formations or sublimations of the aims of this anal libido.

In trying to substitute the *mode of relatedness* for the libido theory, I arrived at the hypothesis that the various traits of the syndrome are manifestations of the distance-keeping, controlling, rejecting, and hoarding mode of relatedness ("hoarding character"). (E. Fromm, 1947a.) This does not imply that Freud's clinical observations with respect to the particular role of everything pertaining to feces and bowel movement was not correct. On the contrary, in the psychoanalytic observation of individuals I have found Freud's observations fully confirmed. The difference lies, however, in the answer to the following: Is the anal libido the *source* of the preoccupation with feces and, indirectly, of the anal character syndrome, or is the syndrome the *manifestation* of a special mode of relatedness? In the latter case the anal interest has to be understood as another, but symbolic expression of the anal character, not as its *cause*. Feces are, indeed, a very fitting symbol: they represent that which is eliminated from the human life process and which no longer serves man's life.[17]

The hoarding character is orderly with things, thoughts and feelings, but his orderliness is sterile and rigid. He cannot endure things to be out of place and has to put them in order; in this way he controls space; by irrational punctuality he controls time; by compulsive cleanliness he undoes the contact he had with the world which is considered dirty and hostile.

(Sometimes, however, when no reaction-formation or sublimation has developed, he is not overclean but tends to be dirty.) The hoarding character experiences himself like a beleaguered fortress: he must prevent anything from going out and save what is inside the fortress. His stubbornness and obstinacy is a quasi-automatic defense against intrusion.

The hoarder tends to feel that he possesses only a fixed quantity of strength, energy, or mental capacity, and that this stock is diminished or exhausted by use and can never be replenished. He cannot understand the self-replenishing function of all living substance, and that activity and the use of our powers increase our strength while stagnation weakens it; to him, death and destruction have more reality than life and growth. The act of

creation is a miracle of which he hears, but in which he does not believe. His highest values are order and security; his motto: “There is nothing new under the sun.” In his relationship to others intimacy is a threat; either remoteness or possession of a person means security. The hoarder tends to be suspicious and to have a special sense of justice that in essence says: “Mine is mine and yours is yours.”

The anal-hoarding character has only one way to feel safe in his relatedness to the world: by possessing and controlling it, since he is incapable of relating himself by love and productivity.

That the anal-hoarding character has the close relationship to sadism described by classic psychoanalysts is amply borne out by the clinical data, and it makes little difference whether one interprets this connection in terms of the libido theory or in terms of the relatedness of man to the world. It is also evidenced by the fact that social groups with an anal-hoarding character tend to exhibit a marked degree of sadism.[18]

Roughly equivalent to the sadomasochistic character, in a social rather than a political sense, is the *bureaucratic charac*ter.[19] In the bureaucratic system every person controls the one below him and is controlled by the one above. Both sadistic and masochistic impulses can be fulfilled in such a system. Those below, the bureaucratic character will hold in contempt, those above, he will admire and fear. One only has to look at the facial expression and the voice of a certain type of bureaucrat criticizing his subordinate, or frowning when he is a minute late, or insisting on behavior that at least symbolically expresses that during office hours he “belongs” to the superior. Or one might think of the bureaucrat behind the post office window and watch his hardly noticeable thin little smile as he shuts his window at 5:30 P.M. sharp, while the last two people who have already been waiting for half an hour have to leave and come back the next day. The point is not that he stops selling stamps at 5:30 sharp: the important aspect of his behavior is the fact that he enjoys frustrating people, showing them that *he* controls them, a satisfaction that is expressed in his facial expression.[20]

Needless to say, not all old-fashioned bureaucrats are sadistic. Only a depth psychological study could show what the incidence of sadism among this group is as compared with non-bureaucrats or modern bureaucrats. To mention only some outstanding examples, General Marshall and General Eisenhower, both among the highest ranking members of the military

bureaucracy during the Second World War, were conspicuous for their lack of sadism and their genuine humane concern for the life of their soldiers. On the other hand a number of both German and French generals in the First World War were conspicuous for the ruthlessness and brutality with which they sacrificed the lives of their soldiers for no adequate tactical purpose.

In many cases the sadism is camouflaged by kindness and what looks like benevolence toward certain people in certain circumstances. But it would be erroneous to think that the kindness is simply intended to deceive, or even that it is only a gesture, not based on any genuine feeling. To understand this phenomenon better, it is necessary to consider that most sane people wish to preserve a self-image that makes them out to be human in at least some respects. To be completely inhuman means to be completely isolated, to lose any sense of being part of humanity. Hence it is not surprising that there are many data which make one assume that the complete absence of any kindness, friendliness, or tenderness to any human being creates, in the long run, intolerable anxiety. There are reports[21] of cases of insanity and psychic disorders, for instance, among men who were in the Nazi special formations and who had to kill thousands of people. Under the Nazi regime a number of the functionaries who had to carry out the orders for the mass killings suffered nervous breakdowns that were called *Funktionärskrankheit* ("funtionaries' disease").[22]

I have used the words "control" and "power" in reference to sadism, but one must be clearly aware of their ambiguity. Power can mean power *over* people, or it can mean power to do things. What the sadist is striving for is power *over* people, precisely because he lacks the power *to be.* Many writers, unfortunately, make use of this ambiguous meaning of the words "power" and "control," and in order to smuggle in the praise of "power over" they identify it with "power to." Moreover, lack of control does not mean lack of any kind of organization, but only of those kinds in which the control is exploitative and the controlled cannot control the controllers. There are many examples from primitive societies and contemporary intentional communities in which there is rational authority based on real—not manipulated—consent of all, and where relations of "power over" do not develop.

To be sure, the one who has no power to defend himself also suffers characterologically. He may become submissive and masochistic instead of

sadistic. But his realistic powerlessness may also be conducive to the development of virtues like solidarity and compassion, as well as to creativity. Being powerless and hence in danger of being enslaved, or having power and hence being in danger of becoming dehumanized, are two evils. Which is to be shunned the most is a matter of religious and moral or political conviction. Buddhism, the Jewish tradition starting with the Prophets, and the Christian Gospels make a clear decision, contrary to contemporary thinking. It is quite legitimate to make subtle differences between power and nonpower, but one danger is to be avoided: that of using the ambiguous meaning of certain words to recommend serving God and Caesar simultaneously, or still worse, to identify them.

Conditions That Generate Sadism

The problem of what factors are conducive to the development of sadism is too complicated to find an adequate answer in this book. One point, however, must be clear from the beginning: there is no simple relation between environment and character. This is because the individual character is determined by such individual factors as constitutionally given dispositions, idiosyncrasies of family life, exceptional events in a person's life. Not only do these individual factors play a role; environmental factors are also much more complex than is generally assumed. As I stressed before, a society is not a society. A society is a highly complex system; the old and the new lower middle classes, the middle classes, the upper classes, decaying elites, groups with or without religious or philosophical-moral traditions, small town and big cities—these are only some of the factors that have to be taken into account; no single isolated factor can account for the understanding of character structure as well as of the structure of the society. Therefore, if one wishes to correlate social structure and sadism, nothing short of a thorough empirical analysis of all factors will do. But at the same time it must be added that the power through which one group exploits and keeps down another tends to generate sadism in the controlling group, even though there will be many individual exceptions. Hence sadism will disappear (except as an individual sickness) only when exploitative control of any class, sex, or minority group has been done away with. With the exception of a few small societies this has not yet happened anywhere in history. Nevertheless, the establishment of an order based on law and

preventing the most arbitrary use of power has been a step in this direction, even though this development has recently been arrested in many parts of the world where it once existed and is threatened even in the United States in the name of “law and order.”

A society based on exploitative control also exhibits other predictable features. It tends to weaken the independence, integrity, critical thinking, and productivity of those submitted to it. This does not mean that it does not feed them with all sorts of amusements and stipulations, but only those that restrict the development of personality rather than further it. The Roman Caesars offered public spectacles, mainly of a sadistic nature. Contemporary society offers similar spectacles in the form of newspaper and television reports on crime, war, atrocities; where the contents are not gruesome, they are as unnourishing as the breakfast cereals that are promoted by the same mass media to the detriment of children’s health. This cultural food does not offer activating stimuli, but promotes passivity and sloth. At best it offers fun and thrills, but almost no joy; for joy requires freedom, the loosening of the tight reins of control, which is precisely what is so difficult for the anal-sadistic type to do.

As to sadism in the individual, it corresponds to the social average, with individual deviations above and below. Individual factors enhancing sadism are all those conditions that tend to make the child or the grownup feel empty and impotent (a nonsadistic child may become a sadistic adolescent or adult if new circumstances occur). Among such conditions are those that produce fright, such as terroristic punishment. By this I mean the kind of punishment that is not strictly limited in intensity, related to specific and stated misbehavior, but that is arbitrary, fed by the punisher’s sadism, and of fright-producing intensity. Depending on the temperament of the child, the fear of such punishment can become a dominant motive in his life, his sense of integrity may be slowly broken down, his self-respect lowered, and eventually he may have betrayed himself so often that he has no more sense of identity, that he is no longer “he.”

The other condition for the generation of vital powerlessness is a situation of psychic scarcity. If there is no stimulation, nothing that awakens the faculties of a child, if there is an atmosphere of dullness and joylessness, the child freezes up; there is nothing upon which he can make a dent, nobody who responds or even listens, the child is left with a sense of powerlessness and impotence. Such a powerlessness does not necessarily

result in the formation of the sadistic character; whether or not it does, depends on many other factors. Yet it is one of the main sources that contribute to the development of sadism, both individually and socially.

When the individual character deviates from the social character, the social group tends to reinforce all those character elements that correspond to it, while the opposite elements become dormant. If, for instance, a sadistic person lives within a group where the majority are nonsadistic and where sadistic behavior is considered undesirable and unpleasant, the sadistic individual will not necessarily change his character, but he will not act upon it; his sadism will not disappear, but will "dry up," as it were, for lack of being fed. Life in the kibbutzim and other intentional communities offers many examples of this, although there are also instances where the new atmosphere produces a real change of character.[23]

A person whose character is sadistic will be essentially harmless in an antisadistic society; he will be considered to be suffering from an illness. He will never be popular and will have little, if any, access to positions in which he can have any social influence. If it is asked what makes the sadism of a person so intense, one must not think only of constitutional, biological factors (S. Freud, 1937), but of the psychic atmosphere that is largely responsible not only for the generation of social sadism but also for the vicissitudes of individually generated, idiosyncratic sadism. It is for this reason that the development of an individual can never be fully understood on the basis of his constitution and his family background alone. Unless we know the location of the person and his family within the social system, and the spirit of this system, we are barred from understanding why certain traits are so persistent and deep-seated.

Heinrich Himmler: A Clinical Case of Anal-Hoarding Sadism

Heinrich Himmler is an excellent example of a vicious, sadistic character who illustrates what has been said about the connection between sadism and the extreme forms of the anal-hoarding bureaucratic, authoritarian character.

The "bloodhound of Europe," as he was called by many, Himmler was, together with Hitler, responsible for the slaughter of between fifteen and twenty million unarmed and powerless Russians, Poles, and Jews.

What kind of man was he?[24]

One may begin by considering a few descriptions of Himmler's character by various observers. Perhaps the most accurate, penetrating characterization of Himmler has been given by K. J. Burckhardt, at the time representative of the League of Nations in Danzig. Burckhardt writes: "Himmler impressed one as of uncanny subalternity *(Subalternität),* narrow-minded conscientiousness, inhuman methodicalness, blended with an element of an automaton." (K. J. Burckhardt, 1960.) This description contains most of the essential elements of the sadistic authoritarian character described above. It emphasizes Himmler's submissive subaltern attitude, his inhuman bureaucratic conscientiousness and methodicalness; it is not the description of a hater or of that of a monster as the latter is usually conceived, but of an extremely dehumanized bureaucrat.

Additional elements of Himmler's character structure are contributed by other observers. A leading Nazi, Dr. Albert Krebs, who was excluded from the party in 1932, spent six hours of conversation with Himmler on a railroad train in 1929—that is, when Himmler had little power—and noted his obvious insecurity and gaucheness. What made the trip almost intolerable for Krebs was the "stupid and basically meaningless chatter with which he intruded upon me all the time." His conversation was a peculiar mixture of martial braggadocio, petit bourgeois small talk *(Stammtischgeschwätz)* and zealous prophecy of a sectarian preacher. (Quoted by J. Ackermann, 1970.) The intrusiveness with which Himmler forces another person to listen to his endless chatter, thus trying to dominate him, is typical of the sadistic character.

Interesting also is the characterization of Himmler by one of the most gifted German generals, Heinz Guderian:

> The most opaque of all Hitler's followers was Heinrich Himmler. This insignificant man, with all signs of racial inferiority, behaved in a simple way. He tried to be courteous. His style of life was, in contrast to Goering's, almost Spartanly simple. But all the more unlimited [ausschweifender] were his fantasies… After the 20th July Himmler was plagued by military ambition. This drove him to get himself appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Reserve Army and even Commander in Chief of any army group. It was on the military level that Himmler failed first and completely. His judgment of our enemies must be called simply childish. I had occasion several times to observe

> his lack of self-confidence and of courage in Hitler's presence. (H. Guderian, 1951.)

Another observer, a representative of the German banking elite, Emil Helfferich, wrote that Himmler was "the type of a cruel educator of the old school, strict against himself but stricter against others… The signs of compassion and especially friendly tone of his thank-you letters were all fake, as one often finds in clearly cold natures." (E. Helfferich, 1970.)

A less negative picture is given by Himmler's aide-de-camp, K. Wolff: it mentions only his fanaticism and his lack of will, not his sadism: "He could be a tender family father, a correct superior and a good comrade. At the same time he was an obsessed fanatic, an eccentric dreamer and … a will-less instrument in Hitler's hands to whom he was tied in an ever increasing love/hate." (K. Wolff, 1961.) Wolff describes two opposite personalities—apparently equally strong—the kind and the fanatic, and does not question the genuineness of the former. Himmler's older brother, Gebhard, describes Heinrich only in positive terms, although the younger brother had hurt and humiliated him long before he was politically powerful. Gebhard even praises the "fatherly kindness and care with which he was concerned with the needs and worries of his subordinates."[25]

These characterizations include Himmler's most significant character traits. His lifelessness, his banality, his wish to dominate, his insignificance, his submission to Hitler, his fanaticism. His friendly concern for others, mentioned by Wolff and by his older brother, was certainly a behavior trait, but to what extent it was a character trait, i.e., genuine, is difficult to assess; considering Himmler's total personality, the genuine element in his kindliness must have been very small.

As the whole structure of Himmler's character becomes clearer, we shall find that he is indeed a textbook illustration for the anal (hoarding) sadomasochistic character, in which we have already noted *overorderliness* and marked *pedantry* as outstanding traits. Since the age of fifteen, Himmler kept a record of his correspondence in which he noted every letter he received and wrote.

> His enthusiasm for these operations and the pedantry and penchant for precise record keeping that he displayed while engaged in them revealed an important aspect of his personality. His book-keeper's

> mentality was most clearly shown in the way he handled the mail he received from Lu and Kaethe [close friends]. (The letters he received from his family have not been preserved.) On each item he wrote not only the date of receipt but even the precise hour and minute when the letter reached his hands. Since many of these items were birthday greetings and the like, his pedantry went beyond absurdity. (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

Later on, when he was a chief of the SS, Himmler had a card index to record every object he had ever given to a person. (B. F. Smith, 1971.) At the suggestion of his father he also wrote a diary from the age of fourteen to twenty-four. Almost every day one finds meaningless entries to which rarely any deeper thought is added.

> Himmler noted how long he had slept, when he went to dinner, where he had tea, or whether he smoked, whom he had met during the day, how long he had studied, to which church he had gone and when he had returned home in the evening. Furthermore he noted whom he visited, whether his hosts were nice to him, at what time he had taken the train to return to his parents, whether the train was late or on time. (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

Here is an example of his diary entries in the weeks from August 1 to August 16, 1915 (B. F. Smith, 1971):

> August
> 1. 15. Sunday … bathed (apparently in a lake, or the sea) a third time … Daddy, Ernsti and I bathed after canoeing for the fourth time. Gebhard was too hot…
> 2. 15. Monday … Evening for the fifth time bathed.
> 3. Tuesday … for the sixth time bathed…
> 6. Friday … bathed a seventh time… Bathed an eighth time.
> 7. Saturday. Morning bathed for the ninth time…
> 8. … bathed for the 10th time…
> 9. Morning bathed for the 11th time… After that for the 12th time…
> 12. Played, then bathed for the 13th time…
> 13. VIII. Played, then bathed for the 14th time…
> 16. VIII. …Then bathed for the 15th and last time…

Another example is the following. On August 23 of the same year, Himmler noted that eight thousand Russians were taken prisoner at Gumbinnen; on August 28, that there were already thirty-thousand Russian prisoners taken in East Prussia, and on August 29, that the number of prisoners was not thirty-thousand but sixty-thousand, and after a still more accurate count, seventy-thousand. On October 4 he noted that the number of Russian prisoners had not been seventy-thousand but ninety-thousand. He added: "They multiply like vermin." (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

On August 26, 1914, he made the following entry:

> 26 August. Played in the garden with Falk. 1,000 Russians captured by our troops east of the Weichsel. Advance of the Austrians. In the afternoon worked in the garden. Played piano. After coffee we visited the Kissenbarths. We were allowed to pick plums from the tree there. So frightfully many have fallen. We now have 42 cm. Cannons. (J. Ackermann, 1970.)

Ackermann comments that it remains obscure whether Himmler was concerned with the number of eatable plums or the number of killed men.

Perhaps some of Himmler's pedantry had been acquired from his father, an extremely pedantic man, a high school teacher, later director whose main strength seems to have been his orderliness. He was a conservative, basically weak man, an old-fashioned, authoritarian father and teacher.

Another outstanding trait in Himmler's character structure is his *submissiveness*, his "subalternity" as Burckhardt has called it. Even though he does not seem to have been excessively afraid of his father, he was most obedient. He belonged to those people who submit not because the authority is so frightening but because *they* are so frightened—not of the authority but of life—that they seek for an authority and want to submit to it. Their submission has, as it were, an opportunistic quality that is very apparent in Himmler's case. He used his father, his teachers, later his superiors in the Army and in the Party, from Gregor Strasser to Hitler, to further his career and to defeat his competitors. Until the time that he found in Strasser and the Nazi leaders new and more powerful father figures, he had never rebelled. He wrote his diaries just as his father had told him to, and felt guilty when he missed a day's entry. He and his parents were

Roman Catholics; they were regular churchgoers, three to four times a week during the war, and he reassured his father that he need not worry about his reading immoral books like those of Zola. But there are no signs of religious fervor in the history of young Himmler; his and his family's attitude was a purely conventional one, characteristic of his class.

The change of allegiance from father to Strasser-Hitler, from Christianity to Aryan paganism, did not occur as a rebellion. It was smooth and cautious. No new step was taken before it was safe to take it. And at the end, when his idol, Hitler, was of no more use, he tried to betray him by attempting to work under new masters, the Allies, the archenemies of yesterday and the victors of today. In this respect lies perhaps the deepest character difference between Himmler and Hitler; the latter was a rebel (although not a revolutionary); the former lacked the rebellious element completely. For this reason there is also no basis for the speculation that Himmler's transformation into a Nazi was an act of rebellion against his father. The real motivation for this change seems to have been different. Himmler needed a strong, powerful guiding figure to compensate for his own weakness. His father was a weak man who, after the defeat of the Imperial system and its values, had lost much of his former social prestige and pride. The Young Nazi movement, while still not strong when Himmler joined it, was strong in the vehemence of its criticism not only of the left but also of the bourgeois system to which his father belonged. These young people played the role of heroes who own the future, and Himmler, the weak, submissive adolescent, found a more suitable image to submit to than his father was. Simultaneously, he could also look down on his father with some condescension, if not hidden contempt, which was as far as his rebellion went.

The most extreme example of his submission was that to Hitler, although one must suspect that his opportunism may have induced him to use a degree of flattery that was not entirely genuine. Hitler was for him the god-man, to be compared to the significance of Christ in the Christian religion or of Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita. He writes of him: "He is destined by the Karma of the universal Germanness *[Germanentum]* to lead the fight against the east and to save the Germanness of the world; one of the very great figures of light has found its incarnation in him." (J. Ackermann, 1970.) He submitted to the new Krishna-Christ-Hitler as he had to the old Christ-God, except much more fervently. It must be noted,

however, that under the circumstances the new gods offered greater opportunities for fame and power.

Himmler's submission to a strong father figure was accompanied by a deep and intense *dependence on his mother,* who loved him and doted on this son. Himmler certainly did not suffer from lack of love from his mother —a cliché to be found in a number of books and articles written about him. One might say, however, that her love was primitive; it lacked insight or vision into what the growing boy needed; it was the love a mother has for an infant, and it did not change its quality as the boy grew up. Thus her love spoiled him and blocked his growth and made him dependent on her. Before I describe this dependency, I want to point out that in Himmler, as in so many others, the need for a strong father is generated by the person's helplessness, which in turn is generated by his remaining a little boy who longs for his mother (or a mother figure) to love him, protect him, comfort him, and not to demand anything from him. Thus he feels not like a man but like a child: weak, helpless, without will or initiative. Hence he will often look for a strong leader to whom he can submit, who gives him a feeling of strength, and who—in an imitating relationship, becomes a substitute for the qualities he lacks.

There was a physical and mental flabbiness in Himmler that is frequently found in such "mother's boys" and that he tried to overcome by "practicing his will power"—but mainly by harshness and inhumanity. To him control and cruelty became the substitutes for strength; yet his attempt had to fail since no weakling becomes strong by being crud: he only hides his weakness temporarily from himself and others, as long as he has the power to control them.

There is abundant evidence to show that Himmler was a typical "mother's boy." At the age of seventeen when he was in military training, away from his parents, he wrote in the first month

> twenty-three letters home, and though he received ten or twelve in reply, he continually complained that the family did not write enough. The first sentence of his letter on January 24 is typical: "Dear Mommy, Many thanks for your dear letter. Finally I received something from you." Two days later, having received another note from home, he starts off in the same vein and adds, "I have waited a painfully long

> time for it." And two letters in three days did not stop him from lamenting on the 29th, "again today I got nothing from you."
>
> His early letters combined pleas for mail with complaints about his living conditions: his room was barren and cold, and he suffered from the attentions of bedbugs; he found the food sparse and uninviting and pleaded for packages of food and enough money to allow him to eat at the canteen or the beerhall restaurants in town. Trivial mishaps, such as the inadvertent picking up of the wrong clothes at the bath, assumed the dimensions of minor tragedies and were reported in detail to the family. In part these complaints and lamentations were appeals for help from Frau Himmler. In response, she dispatched a succession of money orders and of parcels containing food, extra bedding, insect powder, and clean laundry. Apparently much advice and many expressions of worry accompanied the provisions that arrived from Landshut. Under the impact of these messages Heinrich, aware that he must maintain his stance as a brave soldier, would sometimes try to retract the complaint that had set the whole operation in motion. But he always waited until he received the package before changing his tune, and his reserve never lasted long. In the matter of food he was completely unashamed and his letters are filled with appreciative remarks about his mother's cooking ("the *Apfelstrudel* which I ate after the training session was marvelous") and with requests for snacks such as apples and cookies. (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

As time went by, his letters home became somewhat less frequent—although never falling below three a week—yet his requests for mail were as insistent as ever. Sometimes he could get quite unpleasant when his mother did not write him as much as he expected. "Dear Mother," he began a letter of March 23, 1917, "Many thanks for your nice news (which I didn't get). It is really mean of you not to have written."

This need to share everything with his parents, especially with his mother, remained the same when he worked as a *Praktikant* (a student of agriculture who does practical work on a farm). Then nineteen years old, he sent home at least eight letters and cards in the first three and a half weeks, although he often noted that he was too busy to write. When he fell sick with paratyphoid fever his mother was reduced almost to frenzy; on

recovery, he spent a good deal of time in writing her all the details about his state of health, his temperature, bowel movements, aches and pains. At the same time he was clever enough not to want to give the impression that he was a crybaby, interspersing his reports with reassurances that he was fine and chiding his mother for worrying. He even began his letters with three or four items of general interest and then added: “Now as to how it goes with me I can see you, dear mother, fidgeting with impatience.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.) This may have been true, but the sentence is one example of a method Himmler used throughout his life—to project his desires and fears on others.

Thus far we have made the acquaintance of an obsessively orderly, hypochondriacal, opportunistic, narcissistic young man who felt like an infant and yearned for mother protection while simultaneously attempting to follow and imitate a father image.

Undoubtedly Himmler’s dependent attitude, partly generated by his mother’s overindulgent attitude toward him, was increased by certain real weaknesses, both physical and mental. Physically, Himmler was not a very strong child and suffered from ill health from the age of three. At that time he contracted a serious respiratory infection that seems to have settled in his lungs and from which some children had died. His parents were frantic and brought the physician who had delivered the child all the way from Munich to Passau to treat him. To give the child the best care, Frau Himmler went with him to a place with a better climate, and the father visited when he could take time from his work. In 1904 the whole family moved back to Munich for the sake of the child’s health. It is worth noting that the father approved of all these measures, which were costly and inconvenient for him, apparently without protesting.[26]

At the age of fifteen he began to have stomach trouble, which was to plague him for the rest of his life. From the whole picture of this illness it is likely that there was a strong psychogenic factor present. While he resented this stomach trouble as a symptom of weakness, it gave him the chance of being constantly occupied with himself and having people around him who listened to his complaints and fussed over him.[27]

Another illness of Himmler’s was an alleged heart trouble that was supposed to have been the result of his work on the farm in 1919. The same Munich physician who had treated him for paratyphoid fever now made the diagnosis of a hypertrophied (enlarged) heart due to overexertion during his

military service. B. F. Smith comments that in those years the diagnosis of enlarged heart was frequently made and attributed to exertion in the war, and that today most physicians scoff at such diagnoses. Current medical opinion suggests that there was nothing wrong with Himmler's heart, and that aside from problems of insufficient nourishment and the aftermath of the paratyphoid fever, "he was probably in reasonably good health." (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

However this may be, the diagnosis must have increased Himmler's hypochondriac tendencies and his ties to his parents, who continued to be worried and concerned.

But Himmler's physical weakness went beyond those three groups of illnesses—lung, stomach, and heart. He had a soft and flabby appearance and was physically awkward and clumsy. For instance, when he got a bicycle and could accompany his brother Gebhard on his outings, "Heinrich had a penchant for falling off his machine, tearing his clothes, and suffering other mishaps." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) The same physical awkwardness showed in school and was probably even more humiliating.

We have an excellent report on Himmler during his school years by his co-student, G. W. F. Hallgarten, who later became an outstanding historian.[28] In his autobiography Hallgarten states that when he heard of Himmler's rise to power he could hardly imagine that this was the same person who had been his classmate.

Hallgarten describes Himmler as an extraordinarily milk-faced, plump boy who already wore glasses and often showed a "half-embarrassed, half-vicious smile." He was very popular with all teachers and was an exemplary pupil during all his school years, with the best qualifications in all essential subjects. In class he was considered to be overambitious (a *Streber).* There was only one subject in which Himmler was deficient, and that was gymnastics. Hallgarten describes in detail how humiliated Himmler was when he was not able to do relatively simple exercises, and was exposed not only to the ridicule of the teacher but also to that of his classmates, who were happy to see this ambitious boy in a position of inferiority. (G. W. F. Hallgarten, 1969.)

In spite of his orderliness, however, Himmler lacked discipline and initiative, He was a talker, and he knew it, berated himself for it and tried to overcome it. Most of all, he almost completely lacked strength of will; thus, not surprisingly, he praised a strong will and hardness as ideal virtues, but

never acquired them. He compensated for his lack of willpower by his coercive power over others.

An illustration of his own awareness of his submissiveness and lack of will is an entry in his diary on December 27, 1919: “God will bring everything to a good end but I shall not submit without will, to fate but steer it myself as best I can.” (J. Ackermann, 1970.) This sentence is rather tortuous and contradictory. He starts out acknowledging God’s will (at that time he was still a practicing Catholic); then he asserts that he “will not submit,” but qualifies it by adding “without will”—thus solving the conflict between his actual submissiveness and his ideal of having a strong will by the compromise that he will submit but with his will; then he promises himself to steer his own fate, but qualifies this “declaration of independence” with the lame *addition of* “as best I can.” Quite in contrast to Hitler, Himmler always was and remained a weakling, and he knew it. His life was a struggle against this awareness, an attempt to become strong. Himmler was much like an adolescent who wants to and yet cannot stop masturbating, who feels guilty and weak, accuses himself of his weakness, and is always trying to change and never succeeding. But the circumstances and his cleverness permitted him to gain a position of such power over others that he could live with the illusion of having become “strong.”

Himmler felt not only weak and clumsy physically, but he also suffered from a sense of social inferiority. High school professors were on the lowest level of the monarchical system and were in awe of all the ranks above them. That was all the more acute in Himmler’s family, since his father had been for a while the private tutor of Prince Heinrich of Bavaria and had later on kept up enough of a personal relationship so that he could ask the prince to be godfather of his second son, who thus acquired the name Heinrich. With this princely favor granted, the Himmler family had reached the height of their attainable ambitions; the connection would probably have had more favorable consequences had the prince not been killed in battle during the First World War (the only German prince to suffer such a fate). For young Himmler, one might assume, being so eager to hide his sense of worthlessness, the nobility must have seemed like a social heaven barred to him forever.

Yet Himmler’s ambition achieved the impossible. From the timid, socially inferior adolescent who admired and envied the members of the nobility, he became the head of the SS, meant to be the new German

nobility. No longer was there a Prince Heinrich above him, no longer any counts and barons and von's. He, the Reichsführer SS with his underlings, was the new nobleman; he was the Prince; at least this must have been his phantasy. Hallgarten's recollections of their school years points up this connection between the old nobility and the SS. There was a group of sons of noble families in Munich, who lived in a house of their own, but went to the same *Gymnasium* for instruction. Hallgarten remembers that they wore a uniform that was like the later SS uniform, with the exception that the color was dark blue instead of the SS black. His suggestion that this uniform served as a model for the later SS uniform seems very plausible.

Himmler constantly preached courage and the sacrifice of self for the community. That this was a pretense becomes very apparent in the somewhat complicated history of his wish to join the army and go to the front in 1917. Like his older brother—and many other young men who had connections with the higher echelons of the establishment—Heinrich tried to enter a regiment for officers' training in order to become a cadet *(Fähnrich,* a commissioned officer's aspirant). This training had two advantages: the obvious one of achieving officer rank with the hope of continuing as a professional soldier later on, and the less obvious one that this training took a longer time than that of young men who were drafted or volunteered as common soldiers. One could expect that it would take eight or nine months before they could be sent to the front. Ordinary soldiers were usually sent to the front much faster at that period of the war.

Himmler's older brother Gebhard had already entered officer's training in 1916 and was eventually sent to the front. The fuss made by the family about the older brother and the departure of more and more young people headed for the front made Heinrich Himmler plead with his parents to be allowed to quit school and also enter officers' training. Himmler's father did everything he could to fulfill his son's wish by mobilizing his social connections. But in spite of a warm recommendation from the widow of Prince Heinrich, the regiment to which he was recommended already had sufficient candidates for officers' training and rejected him. The father, in his methodical way, applied to twenty-three regiments, after having jotted down the names of the top officers of each regiment and the names of important people who might have a connection with a regimental commander. In spite of this he got nothing but refusals. Even then Professor Himmler was not ready to admit defeat. Five days later he sent a twenty-

fourth application to the 11th Infantry Regiment, which he had not yet approached. While his father was still fighting the battle of the applications, Heinrich temporarily lost hope, and apparently believed that he might be taken into the service as a common soldier. Using his father's connections, he applied to the city of Landshut for service in the *Hilfsdienst,* a kind of war work for those who had not been called up by the Army. He left school and entered this service, apparently with the hope that in this way he might be deferred for a while from the draft; but when the Bavarian School Ministry issued a special order that showed he was in no danger of being drafted, Heinrich reentered school. Shortly afterwards, much to his and his father's surprise, the twenty-fourth application bore fruit, and he was ordered to report in a few days to the 11th Infantry Regiment in Regensburg.

At the end of the first week he heard a rumor that he was not going to be kept in officers' training, but was scheduled to be shipped to the front immediately. "This tale reduced him to greater depths of gloom and washed away his ardor for combat." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) While explaining to his parents that he was desperate only because he would not become an officer, he asked them to intervene with a second cousin who was a commissioned officer in this regiment and request his help in the matter. The parents, especially the mother, were almost as terrified as was the boy himself, and a month later Lieutenant Zahle, the cousin, was still assuring Heinrich that he was not going to be shipped to the front, urging him to calm down and go through with the program.

As soon as his fear of being sent to the front was allayed, Heinrich assumed a position of self-confidence. He dared to smoke (although he had to beg his father for tobacco), and he judged the political situation by commenting on an erroneous report of Ludendorff's resignation that "it did not please him." He spent 1918 from the beginning of the year to early October in training and awaiting orders to go to the front. This time he seems to have been very eager to be sent and tried to win special favor with the officers to assure his own assignment in preference to that of his friend Kistler, who was also eager to go to the front, in case only one of them were to be assigned. But these efforts had no result, and so he resumed his social calls and theater visits.

The obvious question here is why, at this point, he was eager to go to the front when several months earlier he had been so frightened. There are several answers to this seeming contradiction. His brother Gebhard had

been promoted in battle to full cadet, and that must have made Heinrich very jealous and eager to show that he, too, was a hero. It may also be that the competition with Kistler was just enough of a stimulus to make him forget his anxieties through his wanting to beat Kistler in this little game. But it seems to me more likely that the main reason was something else. Just when Heinrich was making these efforts to be sent to the front he wrote: “I see the political situation as very black, wholly black… I will never lose my resolve even if there is a revolution, which is not out of the question.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.) Himmler was shrewd enough to know, as almost everybody else knew in Germany in October 1918, that the war was over and lost. It was pretty safe to want to be sent to the front at that time, when the revolutionary wave was already being felt in Germany and three weeks later the revolution was to break out in full force. In fact, the rising opposition and revolutionary mood caused the military authorities not to send these young men to the front after all.

Another illustration for Himmler’s lack of will and his indecisiveness was his professional life. His decision to study agriculture came as a complete surprise, and its motives are still not clear. With the classical education he had received, his family must have expected him to have a profession like his father. The most plausible explanation seems to be that he doubted his capacity for study in a more exacting, intellectual field, and that the study of agriculture seemed to be a way of attaining some academic rank. One must not forget that this choice of agriculture was the result of his disappointment in not reaching his first goal, to become a professional officer in the Army. His agricultural career was interrupted by real or alleged heart disease, but this did not stop his intention to continue with it. One thing he did was to learn Russian, because he planned to emigrate to the East and become a farmer. He also seemed to think that eventually the *Freikorps* would conquer some territory in the East, and there would be a place for him. He wrote: “At the moment I don’t know why I am working. I work because it is my duty, because I find peace in work and for my German life’s companion with whom one day in the East I’ll live and fight through my life as a German, far from dear Germany.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.) And a month later: “Today, inside myself, I have cut loose from everyone and now depend on myself alone. If I don’t find a girl whose character suits mine and who loves me, I’ll go to Russia alone.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.)

These statements are quite revealing. Himmler tries to deny his fears and loneliness and dependency by an assertion of his strong will. With or without a girl he will live far away from Germany, all by himself, and with this kind of talk he tries to convince himself that he is no longer “mother’s boy.” But actually he behaves like a boy of six who decides to run away from mother only to hide around the corner waiting for her to fetch him. Considering that he was at that time a young man of twenty, the whole plan, under the given circumstances, was one of those unrealistic, romantic phantasies to which Himmler was prone when he was not busy in the immediate pursuit of his interests.

When it turned out that there was no chance for settling in Russia, he began to learn Spanish with the idea of settling as a farmer in South America.[29] At different times he considered places like Peru, Georgia (U.S.S.R.), and Turkey, but all these ideas were pure daydreaming. At this point of his life Himmler had nowhere to go. He could not become an officer. He did not even have the money to become a farmer in Germany—and much less in South America. He lacked not only the money but the imaginativeness, endurance, and independence this would have required. He was in the same position as many others who became Nazis because they had nowhere to go socially or professionally, and yet were ambitious and had an ardent desire to rise.

The hopelessness with regard to achieving an aim, and probably the wish to be far away where nobody would know him, must have been greatly increased by the experience he had as a student in Munich. He became a member of a fraternity and did everything to make himself popular. He visited sick fraternity brothers and sought out members and alumni wherever he went. Yet he was troubled that he was not very popular with his fellow members, some of whom expressed their lack of confidence in him quite openly. His fixed ideas and his continuous organizing and gossiping increased his unpopularity, and he was rebuffed when he tried to be elected to an office in the fraternity. In his relationship to girls he never got beyond his cautious and rigid position, and he put “so much distance between himself and the opposite sex that there was soon little danger that his chastity would be threatened.” B. F. Smith, 1971.)

The more desperate his own professional chances became, the more was Himmler attracted by radical right-wing ideas. He read anti-Semitic literature, and when German Foreign Minister Rathenau was murdered in

1922 he was pleased and called him a “scoundrel.” He became a member of a somewhat mysterious extreme right-wing organization *Der Freiweg,* and made the acquaintance of Ernest Röhm, an activist in the Hitler movement. In spite of all these new sympathies and connections with the radical Right, he was still cautious enough not to throw his lot completely in with them and remained in Munich and continued his customary life. “For despite his politicking, and his torment about himself and his future, many of his habits and old ways, including church attendance, social calls, fraternity dances and shipments of dirty laundry to Ingolstadt [his mother], still held fast.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.) He was saved from his professional predicament by an offer of a job, made by the brother of one of his professors. It was that of technical assistant at a nitrogen fertilizer company, where he was assigned to work on the company’s research on manure. But strangely enough, it was this very job that led him directly into the field of active politics. The plant in which he worked was in Schleissheim, north of Munich, and it so happened that one of the new paramilitary units, *Bund Blücher,* had its headquarters there. He would hardly avoid being drawn into this hub of activity, and after much hesitation he eventually joined Hitler’s NSDAP,[30] one of the more active of competing right-wing groups. It would take too much space to describe the events in Germany and Bavaria at that time. Briefly, the Bavarian government toyed with the idea of turning against the Reich government in Berlin with the help of the right-wing groups, but finally failed to act. In the meantime Himmler left his job in Schleissheim and joined a military unit, a replacement company for a Reichswehr regiment. His company, however, was dissolved by the Reichswehr because there were too many who were willing to participate in an action against Berlin, and thus after only seven weeks Himmler’s new military career was ended. But in the meantime he had made close connections with Röhm, and on the day of the Munich Putsch it was Himmler who carried the old Imperial war flag, and marched at Röhm’s side at the head of a column trying to seize the War Ministry. Röhm and his men surrounded the War Ministry, but were in turn surrounded by Bavarian police. Hitler’s attempt to relieve Röhm had ended in his unsuccessful march against Army troops at the *Feldherrnhalle.* The leaders of the Röhm group *(Reichskriegsflagge)* were taken into custody and Himmler and the rest of the men gave up their weapons, identified themselves to the police, and went home.

Himmler, although still impressed with himself for bearing the flag, was both frightened of being arrested and disappointed that the government was not interested in him. He did not dare to do anything that might lead to an arrest, like working with the forbidden organizations. (It should be realized that an arrest would not have had any frightful consequences. Most likely he would have been released, or acquitted, or have received a short sentence to be confined to a *Festung,* like Hitler—a comfortable place with all conveniences, except the right to leave.) Instead, he satisfied himself with rationalizations: "As a friend, and especially as a soldier and devoted member of the *völkisch* movement, I will never run from danger, but we have a duty to each other and to the movement to hold ourselves in readiness for the struggle." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) Accordingly, he worked in the *völkisch* movement, which was not forbidden, kept trying to get a job, and toyed with the idea of locating an attractive position in Turkey. He even wrote to the Soviet Embassy to inquire if there was any chance of going to the Ukraine-a strange step for this fanatical anti-Communist. In this period his anti-Semitism also became more vicious and was sexually tinged, probably because of his continued preoccupation with sex. He speculated about the morals of girls he met and seized upon erotic literature whenever it was available. While visiting old friends in 1924, he found in their library C. F. Schlichtegrolls' *Ein Sadist im Priesterrock* [A sadist in priestly attire], which had been banned in Germany in 1904. He raced through it in one day. In general, he presented the picture one would expect as an inhibited and frightened young man who suffered from his inability to relate to women.

Eventually the problem of his future was solved. Gregor Strasser, a leader of the *Nationalsozialistische Freiheitsbewegung* and its *Gauleiter* for Lower Bavaria, offered him a job as his secretary and general assistant. He accepted immediately, went to Landshut and rose with Strasser in the party. Strasser represented quite different ideas from those of Hitler. He stressed the social revolutionary features in the Nazi program and was a leader of this more radical wing, together with his brother Otto and Joseph Goebbels. They wanted to move Hitler away from his upper-class orientation and believed the Party should "proclaim a message of social revolution with only a spice of anti-Semitism." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) But Hitler did not change his course. Goebbels, knowing which side was stronger, gave up his own ideas and followed Hitler. Strasser left the party, and Röhm, the chief

of the SA who also represented more radical revolutionary ideas, was murdered on Hitler's orders, in fact at the hands of Himmler's SS men. The death of Röhm and other leaders of the SA was the beginning and condition of Himmler's own rise to the top.

In 1925-26, however, the NSDAP was a small party, the Weimar Republic seemed to have become more stable, and Himmler apparently had some doubts. He had lost former friends, and "even his parents made it clear that they not only disapproved of his party work but looked on him as the proverbial lost son." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) His salary was small, and he often had to borrow money. Thus it is not surprising that again the old wish seized him to obtain a solid position as a farm administrator, and that he toyed once more with the notion of emigrating to Turkey. He remained, however, in his party post because all his attempts to find a job remained completely fruitless—not because his loyalty to the ideas of the party was so strong and unswerving. Shortly after, things brightened. Gregor Strasser became Reich propaganda leader for the party in 1929 and Himmler was made his deputy.

Only three years later Himmler commanded three hundred men of the *Schutz Staffeln* [SS], which by 1933 had grown to an army of fifty thousand.

In his biography of Himmler, Smith comments: "What disturbs us so profoundly is not the organization of the SS nor Himmler's ultimate position as Reich police chief, but the torture of millions of human beings and extermination of millions more. No direct answer to these questions is to be found in Himmler's childhood and youth." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) I do not believe that he is right and shall attempt to show that Himmler's sadism was deeply rooted in his character structure long before he had the occasion to practice it on the scale that made his name enter history as a bloody monster.

We should keep in mind the broad definition of sadism, as the passion for absolute and unrestricted power over another human being; the infliction of physical pain is only one of the manifestations of this wish for omnipotence. We must also not forget that masochistic submissiveness is not the opposite of sadism, but part of the symbiotic system in which complete control and complete submission are manifestations of the same basic vital impotence.

One of the earliest indications of Himmler's pleasure in malignant denunciations of other people might be an incident during the war when Himmler was sixteen years old. Some well-to-do Saxons who spent a vacation in Bavaria had hoarded food there and sent it home, where such things were much more difficult to obtain. They were denounced in the newspaper, and Smith believes that the wealth of information Himmler had about the items they had brought "certainly suggests that be played some part in its exposure." (B. F. Smith, 1971.) A little poem Himmler wrote in 1919 also expresses his cruel streak (in B. F. Smith, 1971):

Franzosen, Franzosen, O gebt nur recht acht
Für euch wird kein Pardon gemacht.
Uns're Kugeln pfeifen und sausen
Und verbreiten euch Schrecken und Grauen
Wenn wir da so unheimlich hausen.

(Frenchmen, Frenchmen, oh pay close attention
For there will be no pardon for you.
Our bullets will whistle and pass
Spreading fright and horror among you
As we so uncannily do as we wish.)

From the age of twenty-one when he felt somewhat more independent because he had begun to find new friends and father figures, he began to be slightly condescending toward his father, although he always couched his preaching in appropriate forms, while the condescending preaching to his older brother Gebhard became increasingly vicious.

It is necessary, in order to trace the development of Himmler's sadism, to understand the significance of his relationship to Gebhard.[31] Gebhard was actually the opposite of Heinrich; he was easy-going, popular, unafraid, and attractive to girls. When the two were younger, Heinrich seems to have admired Gebhard, but this admiration changed to bitter envy when Gebhard succeeded in the various things in which Heinrich failed. He went into the war, was promoted on the battlefield, and received the Iron Cross 1st class. He fell in love with an attractive girt and became engaged to her while his younger brother, possessing neither glory nor love, was awkward, weak, and unpopular. Heinrich shifted his loyalty from Gebhard to his second

cousin Ludwig, who had reasons to feel jealous of Gebhard. At first he only criticized his brother caustically for his lack of discipline and purpose, for not being sufficiently heroic, and for being careless—as usual, criticizing others for the very vices he himself had. But the future Minister of Police appears fully fledged in his relationship to Gebhard after the latter successfully courted a distant and apparently attractive cousin of theirs named Paula. The girl did not fit Heinrich's idea of a shy, retiring, and chaste fiancée, and unfortunately, there was some trouble between Paula and Gebhard because of an alleged earlier "indiscretion" on her side. Gebhard wrote Heinrich imploring him to go to Paula's home and help them to settle the question. This unusual request shows to what extent Heinrich had already succeeded in subduing his older brother, probably by intriguing with his parents. Heinrich went to see Paula, but it is not known what happened. The letter he drafted to her a few weeks later, however, after she had apparently made four pledges of fidelity, shows us something of his coercive character.

> I will gladly believe that you will uphold these four things, especially as long as Gebhard works directly on you through his personal presence. But that is not enough. A man must have certainty from his bride, even if he is not present for years, and doesn't see her and they don't hear anything from each other for a long time (which in the coming terrible war years only too easily could be the case), that she herself with no word, no glance, no kiss, no gesture and no thought *will* be untrue to him… You have a test which you should and *must* [underlined in the original] he able to withstand, and have in a shameful manner not withstood… If your union is to be a happy one for you two and for the health of *das Volk*—which must be built on sound, moral families—you must control yourself with *barbaric* [underlined in the original] strength. Since you do not handle yourself strongly and firmly, and only control yourself to a small degree, and since your future husband, as I have already said, is too good for you, and possesses too little understanding of people and can't learn it since this age won't let it he learned, someone else must do it. Since you both approached me on this affair and drew me in, I feel myself obligated to do it.

For the next seven months Heinrich avoided outright meddling, until in February 1924 he got some kind of information that convinced him, rightly or wrongly, that Paula had again committed an “indiscretion.” This time he did not even tell his brother, but told the story immediately to his parents and tried to convince them that the family honor demanded an end to the engagement. His mother capitulated and agreed in tears, and eventually he persuaded his father as well; only then did he confront Gebhard directly. “When Gebhard agreed to go along and allowed the engagement to end, Heinrich was triumphant and at the same time scornful of his brother’s lack of resistance. It was, he said, ‘as if he [Gebhard] had absolutely no soul.’” This twenty-four-year-old young man had succeeded in breaking down his father, his mother, and his older brother, and in making himself the virtual dictator of the family.

The termination of the engagement was especially distasteful to the Himmlers, all the more so because Paula’s family was distantly related to them. “Yet whenever his parents or Gebhard showed any reluctance about going through with the break, Heinrich was ready to apply more pressure. He visited mutual friends to explain why the engagement must end and in the process tore the girl’s reputation to shreds. When a letter arrived from Paula, his response was to stress the need ‘to stand firm and not let oneself be deterred by doubts.’” At this point the wish to control his brother and parents assumed features of pure sadistic viciousness. He wanted to destroy the girl’s reputation, and in order to humiliate the parents, Gebhard, and the girl’s family even more, insisted that all presents that had been exchanged must be returned. The father’s wish that they end the engagement by mutual consent was turned down by Heinrich, whose hard line triumphed and who eventually rejected all compromise. Himmler had won a total victory and made everybody thoroughly unhappy.

In most cases, the story would have ended here, but not so for Heinrich Himmler. He engaged a private detective to watch Paula’s conduct and asked him to collect stories “that you have heard and which you can prove!” The private detective sent him a collection of stories that might have been compromising. Himmler used the occasion to humiliate Paula’s family still more by returning some more gifts he had received from the family which he had allegedly forgotten to return before, just adding his visiting card. “His final onslaught came two months later in a letter to mutual friends. He asks them to tell Paula to stop saying nasty things about the Himmlers and

adds the warning that, although he is a nice fellow, '*I will be completely different if anyone forces me to it. Then, I will not be stopped by any false sense of pity until the opponent is socially and morally ousted from the ranks of society.*'" (Italics added.)

This was the height of vicious control that Himmler could exert under the circumstances. When by his cunning he was able to use the new political circumstances for his own purposes, he had the possibility to act out his sadism on a historical scale. Yet the Reichsführer SS spoke in terms that were not essentially different from those used by the youthful Himmler in his threat to Paula. This is illustrated by Himmler's speech about twenty years later (1943) about the ethics of the black order:

> One principle must have absolute validity for the SS man, to be honest, decent, loyal, and to be a good comrade to members of our own blood and to nobody else. What happens to the Russians or to the Czechs is a matter of complete indifference to me. What of good blood other peoples have we will take from them by robbing them of their children if necessary, and bringing them up among ourselves. Whether other nations live in prosperity, or whether they perish from hunger, that interests me only inasmuch as we need slaves for our culture; otherwise it does not interest me. Whether in the construction of ditches for Panzers 10,000 Russian women fall down or not, interests me only inasmuch as the ditch is ready for Germany. *We shall never be cruel and heartless where it does not have to be.* (J. Ackermann, 1970. Italics added.)

In this statement the sadist is free to express himself fully. He will rob other people's children if their blood is good. He will take the older ones as "slaves for our culture," and whether they live or die is of no interest to him. The closing of the speech is typical Himmler and Nazi double-talk. He protests his moral kindness by assuring his listeners and himself that he is cruel and heartless only if necessary. This is the same rationalization he used already in his threat to Paula: I shall be pitiless "if anyone forces me to it."

Himmler was a frightened man and always needed rationalizations to embellish his sadism. He may also have needed to protect himself from being confronted with the evidence of his cruelty. Karl Wolff reports that

Himmler witnessed a mass execution in Minsk in the late summer of 1941 and was rather shaken by it. But he said, “Nevertheless, I think it is right that we look at this. Who is to decide over life and death must know what dying is like and what he asks the execution commanders to do.” (K. Wolff, 1961.) Many of his SS men became sick after these mass executions; some committed suicide, became psychotic, or suffered from other severe mental damage.[32]

One cannot speak of Himmler’s sadistic character without discussing what has often been described as his kindness. I have already mentioned that he tried to make himself popular by visiting sick fraternity brothers, but he did similar things also on other occasions. He gave an old woman cake and rolls and recorded in his diary: “If I could only do more, but we are ourselves poor devils” (not true, because his family was a well-to-do-middle-class family and far from being poor devils). He organized a benefit with his friends and gave the proceeds to Viennese children, and he behaved in a “fatherly” way to his SS men, as many have commented. From the whole Picture of Himmler’s character, however, I get the impression that most of these friendly acts were not expressions of genuine friendliness. He had a need to compensate for his own lack of feeling and cold indifference, and to convince himself and others that he was not what he was, or, to put it differently, that he felt what he did not feel. He had to deny his cruelty and coldness by a show of kindness and concern. Even his aversion to hunting animals, which he described as cowardly, could not have been very serious since he proposed in one of his letters that the hunting of big animals should be facilitated for the SS men as a reward for good conduct. He was friendly to children and animals, but even here skepticism must be permitted, because there is almost nothing this man did that did not have the purpose of furthering his own career. Of course, even a sadist like Himmler can have some positive human traits, like kindness to some people in some situations; one would expect him to have such traits. What makes it so difficult to believe in them in Himmler is his complete coldness and the exclusive pursuit of his selfish goals.

There is also a benevolent type of sadism in which control over the other person does not have the aim of harming him, but is meant to work for his own good.[33] It may be that Himmler had some of this benevolent sadism, which often gives the impression of kindness. (In his letters to his parents his condescending preaching has perhaps a benevolent aspect, as

has his relationship to his SS men.) An example is Himmler's September 16, 1938, letter to a high SS officer, Count Kottulinsky: "Dear Kottulinksy, You were very sick and had much trouble with your heart. In the interests of your health, I forbid you any smoking for the next two years. After these two years, you will send me a medical report on your health; after that I shall decide whether the prohibition of smoking will be lifted or will be continued. Heil Hitler." (Quoted by H. Heiber, 1958.) We find the same tone of the schoolmaster in a letter (September 30, 1942) to the chief physician of the SS, Grawitz, who had written him an unsatisfactory report on medical experiments on the concentration camp inmates.

> This letter should not be the cause of your asking yourself for hours whether I shall fire you as Chief Physician, it has only the intention to make you give up now after many years your main defect, your vanity, and yet seriously and really to approach all your tasks also the most disagreeable ones with courage and eventually to give up the drive and the opinion that one can get things in order by much talk and chatter. If you learn this and work on yourself, then everything is in order and I shall then be satisfied again with you and your work. (Quoted by H. Heiber, 1958.)

Himmler's letter to Grawitz is interesting not only for its schoolmasterish tone but also because Himmler admonishes the doctor to give up the very defects which were so clearly his own-vanity, lack of courage, and talkativeness. The collection is full of similar letters in which he plays the role of a strict and wise father. Many of the officers to whom they were written were members of the feudal class, and one may not go far astray if one assumes that it gave Himmler a particular satisfaction to show them his superiority and to treat them like schoolboys. (This is no longer benevolent.)

Himmler's end was as much in line with his character as his life had been. When it was clear that Germany had lost the war, he was preparing negotiations with the Western powers, through Swedish intermediaries, which would leave him in a leading role, and offered concessions with regard to the fate of the Jews. In these negotiations he surrendered one by one the political dogmas to which he had clung so tenaciously. Of course, simply by initiating them, *der treue Heinrich* (loyal Heinrich), as he was

called, committed the last act of treachery to his idol, Hitler. That he thought the Allies would accept him as the new German "Führer" was a sign of his mediocre intelligence and lack of political judgment, as well as of his narcissistic grandiosity, which made him think that he was the most important man even in a defeated Germany. He declined the suggestion of General Ohlendorf to surrender to the Allies and to take responsibility for the SS. The man who had preached loyalty and responsibility now showed, true to character, complete disloyalty and irresponsibility. He fled with a black patch over his eye and without his moustache, with false papers, and in the uniform of a corporal. When he was arrested and brought into a prisoner of war camp, his narcissism apparently could not tolerate being treated like thousands of unknown soldiers. He asked to see the commander of the camp and told him, "I am Heinrich Himmler." Sometime later he bit the cyanide capsule he carried in a hollow tooth. Only a few years earlier, in 1938, he had said in a speech to his officers, "I have no understanding of a person who throws away his life like a dirty shirt because he believes in this way he will evade difficulties. Such a person must be interred like an animal." (J. Ackermann, 1970.)

Thus the circle of his life closed. He had to attain absolute power in order to overcome his own experience of weakness and vital impotence. After he had achieved this aim, he tried to cling to this power by betraying his idol. When he was in a prison camp, as an ordinary soldier, one among hundreds of thousands, he could not bear his reduction to complete powerlessness. He preferred to die, rather than to be thrown back to the role of the powerless man that was for him that of the weakling.

To Sum Up

Himmler is an example of the typical anal-hoarding, sadistic, authoritarian character. He was weak (and did not only *feel* weak); he found a certain sense of security in his orderliness and pedantry, by submitting to strong father images, and eventually he developed a passion for unlimited control over others as the one way to overcome his sense of vital impotence, shyness, uneasiness. He was extremely envious of others whom life had endowed with more strength and self-esteem. His vital impotence and the resulting envy led to the malicious wish to humiliate and destroy them, whether it was his brother Gebhard's fiancée or the Jews. He was

utterly cold and without mercy, which made him feel more isolated and more frightened.

Himmler was also an absolute opportunist. His sadistic passion was always governed by what he thought was advantageous for him: he was disloyal and an inveterate liar-not only toward others, but equally toward himself. Every one of the virtues he eternally preached was conspicuous by its absence within himself. He coined the SS motto, “Loyalty is our Honor,” and betrayed Hitler. He preached strength, firmness, and courage, yet he was weak, flabby, and cowardly. The *“treue Heinrich”* was a living lie. Perhaps the only true thing he ever said about himself was a sentence he wrote to his father while he was in military training: “Have no fears on my account because I am sly as a fox.” (B. F. Smith, 1971.)[34]

A behaviorist might still ask whether Himmler was not a normal man until circumstances made it advantageous for him to act sadistically.

I believe our analysis has already answered this question. We have seen that all the conditions for a sadistic development were given in his earlier development. We have followed the development of his early insecurity, unmanliness, cowardice, sense of impotence, and these attributes alone would indicate the probability of sadistic compensations. Moreover, we have seen the development of his overorderly, pedantic, typically anal-hoarding, authoritarian character. Eventually we have seen his overt pernicious sadism in dealing with his brother’s fiancée, long before he had any power. We must come to the conclusion that the *Reichsführer* SS was a sadistic character before he was a *Reichsführer;* his position gave him the power to act out his sadism on the historical stage; but the sadism was there before.

This question leads to another that has often been raised: What would have become of Himmler had he not been born at the time of the Nazi power, yet endowed with the same character he had at the time of his intervention with his brother’s engagement? The answer is not too difficult to find. Since he was of average intelligence and very orderly, he probably would have found a place in a bureaucratic system, say as a school teacher, postal clerk, or employee in a large business enterprise. Since he ruthlessly sought his advantage, by cleverly flattering his superiors and intriguing against his colleagues he might have risen to quite a high position; probably not to a top position because he lacked any constructive imagination or good judgment. He would have been thoroughly disliked by his colleagues

and perhaps would have become the favorite of a powerful superior. He would have made a good agent for Ford, in Henry Ford's antiunion days, but hardly a good personnel chief in a modern corporation, because his coldness would have made him too unpopular. At his funeral his boss and the minister would have eulogized him as a kind father and husband, a responsible citizen whose selfless services as a church warden would always remain an example and an inspiration.

There are thousands of Himmlers living among us. Socially speaking, they do only minor harm in normal life, although one must not underestimate the number of people whom they damage and make thoroughly unhappy. But when forces of destruction and hate threaten to engulf the whole body politic, such people become extremely dangerous; they are the ones who yearn to serve the government as its agents for terror, for torture and killing. Many people commit the severe error of believing that one can easily recognize a potential Himmler from far away. One of the purposes of characterological studies is to show that the potential Himmler looks like anybody else, except to those who have learned to read character and who do not have to wait until circumstances permit the "monster" to show his colors.

What are the factors that made Himmler a merciless sadist? A simple answer could be found by referring to our previous discussion of the factors that tend to produce the hoarding character. But this would not be a satisfactory answer because Himmler's character presented an extreme and very malignant form of the hoarding character, which is much less frequent than the only slightly sadistic hoarder. If we try to look for the factors responsible for the character development of "the bloodhound of Europe" we first run across his relationship to his parents. He was bound to his mother who encouraged his dependency, and he had an authoritarian, rather weak father. But are there not millions who have the same antecedents and who do not become Himmlers? Indeed, one or two isolated factors can never explain a person's specific character; only a whole system of interrelated factors can more or less fully account for character development. In Himmler we have seen some other factors: his physical weakness and awkwardness, perhaps generated by a number of physical illnesses and an impaired constitution; his sense of social inferiority based on his social fringe position, increased by his father's submissive and worshipful attitude toward the aristocracy; his timidity toward women,

which may have had its cause in his fixation to his mother that made him feel helpless and unmanly; his extreme narcissism and jealousy of his older brother, who had all the qualities Himmler lacked. There are numerous other factors we have not touched upon, partly because of lack of information, that would give us a fuller picture. We must also consider that there may be genetically determined factors that, while not the source of sadism, are responsible for a disposition toward it. But perhaps more than of any other factor we must think of the pathogenic influence of the dry, banal, pedantic, dishonest, unalive atmosphere in which the Himmler family lived. There were no values except the insincere profession of patriotism and honesty, there was no hope except that of managing to hold on to their precarious position on the social ladder. There was no fresh air, spiritually or mentally, that could have encouraged the weak little boy to branch out and develop. And there was not only this family. The Himmlers were part of a social class on the lowest fringe of the imperial system that suffered from resentment, impotence, and joylessness. This was the soil on which Himmler grew—and he became increasingly more vicious as the revolution defeated his social status and values, and as it became clearer to him that he had no future in professional terms.

[1]How late this ritual of eating the flesh from a living animal must have existed can be seen from a Talmudic tradition which states that among the seven ethical norms accepted already by Noah (and through him by all mankind) was the prohibition to eat meat from a living animal.

[2]Report on the North Western Indians of Canada, in Proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1889 (quoted by J. G. Bourke, 1913).

[3]I use the term “destructiveness” here to include both destructiveness proper (“necrophilia”) and sadism, a distinction that will be made later.

[4]Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, act 3, sc. 1, gives a beautiful and moving expression to this elementary sense of equality.

[5]Cf. G. M. Foster (1972).

[6]For instance, the contrast between system A and system C cultures, discussed in chapter 8.

[7]These dances are of high artistic value, and their function goes far beyond the one I have stressed here.

[8]The name of the town is Calanda. I saw a film of this ritual and have never forgotten the extraordinary impression the orgy of hate made on me.

[9]I do not know whether or what kind of changes occurred in his personality in his later life. My analysis is strictly limited to what he says about himself and his friends at the time about which he writes, provided the novel is autobiographical.

[10]Cf. J. P. de River (1956). The book contains a collection of interesting criminal case histories dealing with sadistic acts, but suffers from the indiscriminate use of the concept "sadism" to cover various impulses to harm others.

[11]Cf. D. G. Gill (1970); in R. Helfner and C. H. Kempe, eds. (1968) cf. S. X. Radhill, also B. F. Steele and C. B. Pollock.

[12]The Talmud states that whoever humiliates someone in front of others is to be considered as one who has killed him.

[13]The quotations in this section are from the same work.

[14]"Medvedev reports that she was tortured by investigators unto she signed statements compromising her husband; Stalin ignored them for the time being; he wanted them as a basis for the arrest of Kalinin and others whenever it would please him.

[15]Of course, Stalin knew quite well, says Medvedev, that Kavtaradze had not wanted to kill him.

[16]The authoritarian character was first analyzed in the German study referred to in a footnote in chapter 2. The analysis of the data showed that 78 per cent of the respondents had neither an authoritarian nor an antiauthoritarian character and hence would not, in the case of Hitler's victory, become ardent Nazis or ardent anti-Nazis. Abut 12 per cent had an anti-authoritarian character and would remain convinced enemies of Nazism, while about 10 per cent had an authoritarian character and would become ardent Nazis. These results correspond very roughly to what actually happened after 1933. (E. Fromm et al., 1936a.) Later, the authoritarian character was studied by T. Adorno. However, in this study the authoritarian character is treated behavioristically, not psychoanalytically in terms of the sadomasochistic character. (T. Adorno *et al*., 1950.)

[17]Those wishing to speculate might consider that the fascination with feces and smells constitutes a kind of neurophysiological regression to an evolutionary stage in which the animal was oriented more by smell than by sight.

[18]Cf. E. Fromm (1941a), where I showed this connection in the German lower middle class.

[19]In speaking here of bureaucrats I refer to the old-fashioned, cold, authoritarian bureaucrats as they are still found in many old-fashioned schools, hospitals, prisons, railroads, and post offices. Big industry, which is also a highly bureaucratic organization, has developed an entirely different character-type—the friendly, smiling, "understanding" bureaucrat who hats perhaps taken a course in "human relations." The reasons for this change lie in the nature of modern industry, its need for teamwork, for avoiding friction, for better labor relations, and a number of other factors. It is not as if the new friendly bureaucrats were insincere, as if they were really sadists who smile instead of showing their real faces; in fact, the old-fashioned sadist is not very suited to be a modern bureaucrat, for the reasons just mentioned. The modern bureaucrat is not a sadist turned friendly, but he is a thing to himself, and his friendly treatment, while not false, is so superficial and thin as to become false. But even this is not quite fair, because nobody really expects it to be more than superficial and thin, except perhaps for the short moment when they both smile and indulge in the delusion that this is human contact. Two extended and thorough studies of the character of the modern manager will confirm or correct these impressions. (M. Maccoby; I. Millán, each forthcoming, to be published in 1974.)

[20]This is an example of the many behavioral data that elude the wide meshes of most psychological experiments and tests.

[21]Indirectly admitted by Himmler in a speech, October 6, 1943. Koblenz: Nazi Archiv. NS 19, H. R. 10.

[22]H. Brandt, personal communication.

[23]Dr. Moshe Budmor, personal communication.

[24]The analysis of Himmler follows mainly the data given by B. F. Smith (1971) in his excellent biography. Smith used all available data on Himmler including: Himmler's six diaries (found in 1957) covering the years 1910-1922, as well as a few loose diary pages from 1924; Himmler's list of the correspondence he received and sent between 1918 and 1926: Himmler's long, annotated list of his readings, comprising some two hundred seventy entries; numerous family documents, and Himmler's own collection of official papers and personal mementos. I have also used the study by J.

Ackermann (1970), which contains a large number of excerpts from the Himmler diaries, and S. T. Angress and B. F. Smith (1959).

[25]Gebhard Himmler, from an unpublished sketch of Heinrich Himmler's personality.

[26]This is another factor that makes me assume that the father was not such a harsh and frightening disciplinarian as he is sometimes painted.

[27]When he was in power he found such a figure in Dr. Kersten, who seems to have had some influence on him, which is not surprising, considering Kersten's function as a mother figure.

[28]Cf. G. W. F. Hallgarten (1963).

[29]His method is also characteristic of his pedantic, methodological orientation. He learns a language before having even the slightest idea of what the practical possibilities are for attaining the goal for which he is learning the language. But to learn a language does not do any harm; it does not require making a decision and lets him believe that he has a great plan, while he is actually doing nothing but drift. This is precisely his situation in the early 1920s.

[30]Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei ("National Socialist German Workers' Party").

[31]My source for the following discussion of Heinrich's relationship with Gebhard is the description in B. F. Smith (1971).

[32]Cf. R. Höss, commandant in Auschwitz (quoted by J. Ackermann, 1970). See also Himmler's October 1943 speech, to the highest SS leaders, on "nervous breakdowns" as one possible consequence of his extermination campaign. (Koblenz: Nazi Archiv. NS 19, H.R. 10.)

[33]Cf. the discussion of "benevolent" sadism in E. Fromm (1941a).

[34]Himmler is a good example of the contradiction between image and reality among many political leaders: he is the ruthless sadist and coward who builds up the image of a kind, loyal, courageous man. Hitler, the "savior" of Germany, who "loved" his country beyond anything else, was a ruthless destroyer not only of his enemies but of Germany herself. Stalin, the "Kind father of his country," almost destroyed it and morally poisoned it. Another outstanding example of fakery was Mussolini: he, who played the role of the aggressive, courageous male whose motto was "to live dangerously," was of an exceptional personal cowardice. Angelica Balabanoff who was co-editor of Avand in Milan when Mussolini was still a Socialist, told me that the physician who took blood from him for a test

said he had rarely seen a man who behaved as cowardly in this situation as Mussolini. Furthermore, Mussolini waited for her every afternoon to leave the office, so that he could walk home with her. He said “I am afraid of every shadow and every tree.” (At that time there was no danger whatsoever to his safety.) There are many other examples of his cowardliness; one from his later years is when his son-in-law, Count Ciano, was condemned to death and he, Mussolini—the only one who could have commuted the sentence—could not be reached during the twenty-four hours in which a stay of execution could have been ordered.

12. Malignant Aggression: Necrophilia

The Traditional Concept

THE TERM "NECROPHILIA," love of the dead,[1] has been applied generally only to two kinds of phenomena: (1) sexual necrophilia, a man's desire to have sexual intercourse or any other kind of sexual contact with a female corpse, and (2) nonsexual necrophilia, the desire to handle, to be near to, and to gaze at corpses, and particularly the desire to dismember them: But the term has generally not been applied to a *character-rooted passion,* the soil in which its more overt and cruder manifestation grows. A look at some examples of necrophilia in the traditional sense will make it easier to identify the less obvious *necrophilous character.*

Reports on cases of necrophilia can be found in a number of works, especially those on sexual perversions and criminology. The most complete selection is given by H. von Hentig, one of the foremost German criminologists, in a work dealing exclusively with this subject. (In German as well as in the criminal law of other countries, necrophilia constitutes a crime.) He cites as examples of necrophilia: (1) acts of sexual contact with a female corpse (intercourse, manipulation of sexual organs), (2) sexual excitement produced by the sight of a woman's corpse, (3) attractions to corpses and graves and to objects connected with the grave, such as flowers or pictures,[2] (4) acts of dismemberment of a corpse, and (5) the craving to touch or to smell the odor of corpses or anything putrid. (H. von Hentig, 1964.)

Von Hentig shares the opinion of other authors—such as T. Spoerri (1959), whom he quotes—that necrophilia is much more frequent than is generally assumed. For practical reasons, however, this perversion meets with very limited possibilities for satisfaction. The only people who have easy access to corpses and the opportunity to act out such a perversion are gravediggers and morgue attendants. Thus it is not surprising to find that most examples given deal with this group of people. Of course, it is also

possible that these occupations may in themselves tend to attract necrophilous persons. Murderers, of course, also have the opportunity to practice necrophilia, but considering that murder used to be relatively rare, we cannot expect to find many instances in this category, except in some of these cases classified as “lust murder.” However, von Hentig quotes a number of examples in which outsiders have dug up corpses, abducted them, and used them sexually to satisfy their necrophilous craving. The conclusion is unavoidable that since necrophilia is relatively frequent among those who have an easy opportunity, it must also be present, at least in phantasies or acted out in other, less obvious ways, in many others who lack this opportunity.

This is a case history of a twenty-one-year-old morgue attendant reported by J. P. de River. At the age of eighteen he fell in love with a girl with whom he had sexual intercourse just once, because she was in poor health (pulmonary tuberculosis). He states: “I have never gotten over the death of my sweetheart, and whenever I commit the act of masturbation, I visualize having sexual intercourse with my dead sweetheart.” De River’s report continues:

> Upon the death of his sweetheart, he was so emotionally upset at seeing her laid out in a white shroud that he had a crying spell, and he allowed himself to be removed from the side of the casket with great reluctance. At this time he felt an urge to jump into the casket with her, and he actually wanted to be buried alive with his sweetheart. He created quite a scene at the burial, and at the time everyone, including his family thought this was the result of his great grief at seeing her laid away; but he now comes to realize that it was a fit of passion and that he was overcome with a great sexual urge at the sight of the deceased. At that time, he had just completed his last year in high school, and he tried to prevail upon his mother to allow him to enter medical school, but because of lack of funds he was unable to do so. However, at his suggestion, she allowed him to enter a school of undertaking and embalming, because the course was much cheaper and shorter.
>
> D. W. studied very hard at this school, realizing at last that he had found a profession in which he would be most happy. He was always intensely interested in the female bodies in the embalming room, and

on numerous occasions he had a great desire to have an act of sexual intercourse with a female cadaver. He realized that this was wrong and fought the desire off on numerous occasions until one day, near the completion of his studies, when he was alone in the room with the body of a young girl, the urge to commit an act of sexual intercourse upon the body of the deceased victim was so great and the circumstances so ideal he let himself go. He took advantage of this opportunity and exposed his privates, touching his penis to her thigh, at which time he became greatly excited. Losing control of himself, he leaped upon the body and copulated his mouth to the private parts of the cadaver. He states that this caused him such sexual stimulation that he had a seminal emission. He was then seized with great remorse and fear—the fear of being detected and found out by his fellow students. Shortly after the commission of this act, he graduated from the school, and secured a position as morgue attendant in a Midwestern city. As he was the junior member of the staff of morgue attendants, he was frequently called upon to remain alone in the morgue at night. D. W. stages, "I was glad of the opportunity of being alone, as I had come to realize that I was different from other men, in that I longed to be alone with the dead, and this would give me ample opportunity to attempt an act of coitus with a corpse—a feeling that I came to realize existed ever since the death of my sweetheart."

He violated scores of female corpses in the two years that he remained attached to the morgue, by practicing various perversions on them, ranging in age from infants to elderly women. He usually began by sucking their breasts and copulating his mouth to their privates, after which acts he would become so excited that he would crawl upon their bodies, and with superhuman effort he would perform the act of coitus. He has had as many as four or five acts a week of this nature, depending upon the number of female corpses in the morgue.

…On one occasion, he was so impressed with the corpse of a young girl fifteen years of age that when alone with her the first night after death, he drank some of her blood. This made him so sexually excited that he put a rubber tube up into the urethra, and with his mouth sucked the urine from her bladder. On this occasion he felt more and more of an urge to go further and felt that if he could only devour her—eat her up—even chew part of her body, it would give him great

> satisfaction. He was unable to resist this desire, and turning the body upon its face, he bit into the flesh of the buttocks near the rectum. He then crawled upon the cadaver and performed an act of sodomy on the corpse. (J. P. de River, 1956.)

This case history is particularly interesting for several reasons. First and most obviously, because it combines necrophilia with necrophagia and anal eroticism. The other, less obvious point lies in the beginning of the perversion. If one knew the story only up to the death of his sweetheart, one might be prone to interpret his behavior as an expression of the intensity of his love. But the rest of the story throws a very different light on the beginning: one could hardly explain his indiscriminate necrophilous and necrophagous desires as being caused by the love for his sweetheart. One is forced to assume that his "mourning" behavior was not the expression of love, but the first symptom of his necrophilous desires. It would then also appear that the fact that he had sexual intercourse with his sweetheart only once is poorly rationalized by her illness. It is more likely that because of his necrophilous tendencies he had little desire for sexual intercourse with a live woman.

De River gives another, less complex case history of a necrophilous morgue attendant. The subject is an unmarried man, aged forty-three, who states:

> At the age of eleven, while a grave digger in Milan, Italy, I began masturbating, and when alone would do so while touching the bodies of the dead, young, good-looking women. Later I began inserting my penis into the dead girls. I came to America and left the east coast after a short stay, and came to the west coast where I secured a job washing bodies at a mortuary. Here I resumed my practice of having intercourse with dead girls, sometimes in the caskets or on the tables where the bodies are washed.

The report continues:

> He admits using his mouth on the private parts, and sucking the breasts of young girl corpses. When asked how many women he has had, he states: "Maybe hundreds, as it has been going on since I was eleven years old." (J. P. de River, 1956.)

The literature quoted by von Hentig reports many similar cases.

A great attenuated form of necrophilia is to be found in individuals who become sexually excited by the sight of corpses and sometimes masturbate in front of them. The number of such persons can hardly be estimated because they are rarely discovered.

The second form of necrophilia appears unalloyed with sex, in acts of the pure passion to destroy. Often this urge to destroy is already manifest in childhood; sometimes it shows itself only at a later age. Von Hentig writes very sensitively that the aim of necrophilous destructiveness is the passion "to tear apart living structures" *(lebendige Zusammenhänge).* This desire to tear apart what is alive finds its clearest expression in a craving to dismember bodies. A typical case reported by Spoerri is that of a man going to the cemetery at night with all the necessary instruments, digging up the coffin, opening it, and taking the corpse with him to a place where he could hide it; he would then cut off the legs and the head and cut open the stomach. (T. Spoerri, 1959.) Sometimes the object of dismemberment is not a human being but an animal. Von Hentig tells about a man who stabbed thirty-six cows and mares to death and then cut off various parts of their bodies. But we hardly need the literature; there are enough newspaper reports about murders where the victim has been dismembered or mutilated. These cases are usually subsumed under the classification of murder, but they are committed by necrophilous murderers who are different from most murderers, whose motive is gain, jealousy, or revenge. The real aim of necrophilous murderers is not the death of the victim—which is, of course, a necessary condition—but the act of dismemberment. In my own clinical experience I have seen sufficient evidence that the desire for dismemberment is highly characteristic of the necrophilous character. For example, I have seen (directly or through supervision) several persons who expressed the desire for dismemberment in a very attenuated form: they would draw the figure of a nude woman, then cut out the arms, legs, head, etc., and play with these parts of the dismembered drawing. This "play" was in fact, however, the satisfaction of an intense craving for dismemberment acted out in a safe and harmless way.

In many other necrophilous people I have observed that they had many dreams in which they saw parts of dismembered bodies floating or lying around, sometimes in blood, often in dirty water together with feces. The desire to dismember bodies, if it appears frequently in phantasies and

dreams, is one of the most reliable factors for the diagnosis of the necrophilous character.

There are other, less drastic forms of overt necrophilia. One of them is the craving to be near corpses, cemeteries, or any object in decomposition. H. J. Rauch tells of a girl who suffered from an urge to be close to corpses, in whose presence she would become rigid and unable to tear herself away. (H. J. Rauch, 1947.)[3] Steckel tells of a woman who stated: "I often think of cemeteries and of the manner in which corpses decay in the grave." (Quoted by H. von Hentig, 1964.)

This interest in decay is frequently expressed in the craving to smell the odor of something that is decaying. This is very apparent in the following case of a thirty-two-year-old, highly educated man who was almost totally blind. He was frightened of noise, "but liked to hear women's cries of pain and loved the smell of decaying flesh. He had a craving for the corpses of tall, fat women and wanted to crawl into them." He asked his grandmother whether he could have her corpse later. "He would like to drown in the decay of her remnants." (T. Spoerri, 1959.) Von Hentig speaks of "sniffers" *(Schnüffler),* for whom the smell of human excrements or of anything putrid is exciting, and he considers this trait a manifestation of necrophilia. With the addition of cases of necrophilous fetishism-the objects of which are connected with graves, such as grass, flowers, pictures—we can end this brief survey of necrophilous practices reported in the literature.

The Necrophilous Character[4]

The term "necrophilous," to denote a character trait rather than a perverse act in the traditional sense, was used by the Spanish philosopher Miguel de Unamuno in 1936[5] on the occasion of a speech by the nationalist general Millán Astray at the University of Salamanca, where Unamuno was rector at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. The general's favorite motto was *Viva la Muerte!* ("Long live death!") and one of his followers shouted it from the back of the hall. When the general had finished his speech, Unamuno rose and said:

> Just now I heard a *necrophilous* and senseless cry: "Long live death!" And I, who have spent my life shaping paradoxes which have aroused the uncomprehending anger of others, I must tell you, as an expert

> authority, that this outlandish paradox is repellent to me. General Millán Astray is a cripple. Let it be said without any slighting undertone. He is a war invalid. So was Cervantes. Unfortunately there are too many cripples in Spain just now. And soon there will be even more of them if God does not come to our aid. It pains me to think that General Millán Astray should dictate the pattern of mass psychology. A cripple who lacks the spiritual greatness of a Cervantes is wont to seek ominous relief in causing mutilation around him. (M. de Unamuno, 1936.)

At this Millán Astray was unable to restrain himself any longer. *"Abajo la inteligencia!"* ("Down with intelligence!") he shouted. "Long live death!" There was a clamor of support for this remark from the Falangists.

But Unamuno went on:

> This is the temple of the intellect. And I am its high priest. It is you who profane its sacred precincts. You will win, because you have more than enough brute force. But you will not convince. For to convince you need to persuade. And in order to persuade you would need what you lack: Reason and Right in the struggle. I consider it futile to exhort you to think of Spain. I have done. (M. de Unamuno, 1936.)[6]

I adopted the use of the term from Unamuno and have been studying the phenomenon of character-rooted necrophilia since about 1961.[7] My theoretical concepts were gained mainly by observation of persons in analysis.[8] The study of certain historical personalities—Hitler, for example—and the observation of individuals and of the character and behavior of social classes offered additional data for the analysis of the necrophilic character. But as much as my clinical observations influenced me, I believe the decisive impulse came from Freud's theory of the life and the death instincts. I had been deeply impressed by his concept that the striving for life and the striving for destruction were the two most fundamental forces within man; but I could not reconcile myself to Freud's theoretical explanation. Yet Freud's idea guided me to see clinical data in a new light and to reformulate—and thus to preserve—Freud's concept on a different theoretical basis and based on clinical data which, as I shall show later, link up with Freud's earlier findings on the anal character.

Necrophilia in the characterological sense can be described as *the passionate attraction to all that is dead, decayed, putrid, sickly; it is the passion to transform that which is alive into something unalive; to destroy for the sake of destruction; the exclusive interest in all that is purely mechanical. It is the passion to tear apart living structures.*

Necrophilic Dreams

The attraction to what is dead and putrid can be observed most clearly in the dreams of necrophilous persons.

> *Dream 1.* "I find myself sitting on the toilet; I have diarrhea and defecate with an explosive force which sounds as if a bomb had exploded and the house might collapse. I want to take a bath, but when I try to turn on the water I discover that the tub is already filled with dirty water; I see feces together with a cut-off leg and arm floating in the water."

The dreamer was an intensely necrophilous person who had had a number of similar dreams. When the analyst asked the dreamer what his feelings were in the dream about what was going on, he reported that he did not feel the situation to be frightening, but that it embarrassed him to tell the dream to the analyst.

This dream shows several elements characteristic of necrophilia, among which the theme of dismembered parts of the body is the most obvious. In addition, there is the close connection between necrophilia and anality (to be discussed later) and the theme of destruction; if we translate from symbolic to clear language, the dreamer feels that he wants to destroy the whole building by the force of his elimination.

> *Dream 2.* "I am going to visit a friend; I walk in the direction of his house, which is well-known to me. Suddenly the scene shifts. I am in a kind of dry, desert-like scenery; no plants or trees. I still seem to be trying to find my friend's house, but the only house in sight is a peculiar building which does not have any windows. I enter through a small door; when I close it I hear a peculiar noise, as if the door had been locked, not just shut. I try the doorknob and cannot open it. With

> great anxiety I walk through a very narrow corridor—in fact it is so low that I have to crawl—and find myself in a large, oval, darkened room. It looks like a big vault. When I get accustomed to the dark I see a number of skeletons lying on the ground and I know that this is my grave. I wake up with a feeling of panic."

This dream hardly requires any interpretation. The "vault" is a tomb and simultaneously symbolizes the womb. The "house of the friend" is a symbol of life. Instead of walking toward life, to visit a friend, the dreamer walks toward a place of the dead. The desert-like scenery and the tomb are symbols of the dead. By itself, such a dream is not necessarily indicative of necrophilia; it might be nothing but the symbolic expression of the fear of dying. But it is different if, as was the case with this dreamer, he has many dreams in which he sees tombs, mummies, skeletons; in other words, when the imagination of his dream life is mainly occupied with visions from the world of the dead.

> *Dream 3.* This is a short dream of a woman suffering from a severe depression: "I am defecating; it goes on and on, until the excrement goes beyond the toilet seat, begins to fill the bathroom, rises higher and higher—I am drowning in it[9]—at this moment I wake up with unspeakable horror." For this person the whole of life has been transformed into dirt; she can produce nothing but dirt; her world becomes dirt, and her death is the final union with dirt. We find the same theme in the myth of Midas: everything he touches is transformed into gold—symbolically, as Freud has shown, dirt or feces.[10]

Dream 4. The following is a dream of Albert Speer (September 12, 1962) during the years of his life in the Spandau prison.

> "Hitler is to come for an inspection. I, at the time still a Minister of State, take a broom in my hands to help sweep up the dirt in the factory. After the inspection I find myself in his car, trying vainly to put my arm into the sleeve of my jacket which I had taken off while sweeping. My hand lands again and again in the pocket. Our drive ends at a large square surrounded by government buildings. On one side is a war memorial. Hitler approaches it and lays down a wreath.

> We enter the marble vestibule of one of the government buildings. Hitler says to his adjutant: ‘Where are the wreaths?’ The adjutant to an officer: ‘As you know, he now lays wreaths everywhere.’ The officer is wearing a light-colored, almost white uniform made of some sort of glove-leather; over the jacket he wears, as though he were an altar-boy, a loose garment decorated with lace and embroidery. The wreath arrives. Hitler steps toward the right of the hall where there is another memorial with many wreaths already at its base. He kneels, and begins to intone a plaintive melody in the style of a Gregorian chant, in which is repeated again and again a longdrawn-out “Jesus Maria.” Numerous other memorial plaques line the walls of this long, high-ceilinged, marble hall. Hitler, in an ever-faster sequence, lays wreath after wreath, which are handed to him by the busy adjutants. His plaintive tones become more and more monotonous, the row of memorial plaques seems to be endless.”[11]

This dream is interesting for many reasons. It is one of those in which the dreamer expresses his insight into another person rather than his own feelings and desires.[12] These insights are sometimes more precise than the dreamer’s conscious impression of another person. In this case Speer clearly expresses in a Chaplinesque style his view of Hitler’s necrophilous character. He sees him as a man who devotes all his time to paying homage to death, but in a very peculiar way his actions are entirely mechanical, leaving no room for feelings. The wreath-laying becomes an organizational ritual to the point of absurdity. In juxtaposition, the same Hitler, having returned to the religious belief of his childhood, is completely immersed in the intonation of plaintive tones. The dream ends by stressing the monotony and the mechanized manner of his grief ritual.

In the beginning of the dream, the dreamer brings to life a situation out of reality, from the time when he is still a minister of state and a very active man who does things himself. Perhaps the dirt he is sweeping is a symbolic expression of the dirt of the Nazi regime, his inability to put his arm into the jacket sleeve is most likely a symbolic expression of his feeling that he cannot participate further in this system; this forms the transition to the main part of the dream in which he recognizes that all that is left are the dead and the necrophilous, mechanical, boring Hitler.

> *Dream 5.* “I have made a great invention, the ‘superdestroyer.’ It is a machine which, if one secret button is pushed that I alone know, can destroy all life in North America within the first hour, and within the next hour all life on earth. I alone, knowing the formula of the chemical substance, can protect myself. (Next scene.) I have pushed the button; I notice no more life, I am alone, I feel exuberant.”

This dream is an expression of pure destructiveness in an extremely narcissistic person, unrelated to others and with no need of anyone. This was a recurrent dream with this person, together with other necrophilous dreams. He was suffering from severe mental sickness.

> *Dream* 6. “I am invited to a party with many young men and women. We are all dancing. But something strange is going on: the rhythm becomes slower and slower, and it seems that soon nobody will move any more. At this moment an oversized couple enter the room; it seems they have a great deal of equipment in two big cartons. They approach the first dancing couple: the man takes a big knife and cuts the boy in his back; strangely no blood flows and the boy does not seem to feel any pain; the tall man then takes something I cannot see, like a little box, and puts it into the boy’s back; it is very small. He then puts a kind of small key, or perhaps a button, into the little box (but in such a way that the boy can touch it) and makes a movement as if he were winding a watch. While the tall man was doing this with the boy, his partner performed the same operation on the girl. When they have finished the young couple continue dancing, but fast and energetically. The tall couple perform the same operation on the other nine couples present, and after they leave everybody seems to be in an excited and happy mood.”

The meaning of the dream is rather clear when we translate it from symbolic into plain language. The dreamer feels that life is slowly ebbing, that its energy is spent. But a gadget can become a substitute. Persons, like clocks, can be wound up, and they will then appear to be intensely “alive” although in fact they will have become automatons.

The dreamer is a young man of nineteen, studying engineering and completely absorbed in all that is technical. Had he only had this one

dream, it might be thought an expression of his technical interests. He had, however, many dreams in which the other aspects of necrophilia are present. The dream was not essentially a reflection of his professional interests; his professional interests are, rather, a reflection of his necrophilous orientation.

Dream 7. This dream of a successful professional is particularly interesting because it illustrates a point concerning the necrophilous character of modern technique that will be discussed further on.

> "I am slowly approaching the entrance of a cavern and can already see something in it that impresses me greatly; inside are two humanized swine manipulating a small old wagon of the kind used in mines; they place it on the rails that go into the interior of the cavern. Inside the little wagon I see normal human beings; they seem to be dead, but I know that they are asleep.
>
> "I do not know whether this is another dream or the continuation of the previous one—I believe I woke up, but am not sure. The beginning is the same, I am once more approaching the entrance to a cavern; I leave the sun and the blue sky behind. I go in deeper and see a very intense glow at the end; when I arrive there I marvel at the sight of an extraordinarily modern city; everything is full of light which I now know is artificial—by electricity. The city is made completely of steel and glass—the future. I continue walking and suddenly realize that I have seen no one—no animal or person. I now find myself before a large machine, a sort of enormous, very modern electric transformer connected to numerous thick cables, like high-tension cables; they look like black hoses. The thought comes to me that these cables are conducting blood; I feel very excited, and find an object in my trouser pocket which I immediately recognize; it is a small pocketknife my father gave me when I was about twelve years old. I approach the machine and make a cut in one of the cables with my little knife; suddenly something spurts out, and I get soaked by it. It is blood. I awaken in great anxiety and am sweating."

After having related his dream, the dreamer added: "I do not understand the machine and the blood very well, but here blood substitutes electricity, both

being energy. I do not know why I think of it like this; perhaps I think that the machine takes blood out of men."

This, as in the case of Speer's dream, is not the dream of a necrophilous, but of a biophilous person who recognizes the necrophilous character of the contemporary world. The cavern, as so often, is a symbol of the dead, like a tomb. The cavern is a mine, and the people working there are swine, or dead. (The "knowledge" that they are not really dead is a correction out of an awareness of reality that sometimes enters into dream imagery.) The meaning is: this is a place of degraded and corpse—like men. This scene of the first act of the dream plays in an older stage of industrial development. The second act plays in the fully developed cybernetic age of the future. The beautiful modern city is dead; there are no animals, no persons. A powerful technique sucks the life (blood) out of man and transforms it into electricity. When the dreamer tries to cut the electric cables (perhaps to destroy them), he is soaked by the blood spurting out—as if he were committing a murder. In his sleep the dreamer has a vision of the deadness of totally technicized society with a clarity and artistic sense that we might find in Blake or in a surrealist painting. Yet when he is awake he knows little of what he "knows" when he is not exposed to the noise of common *non*-sense.

"Unintended" Necrophilic Actions

Dreams are one of the most explicit expressions of necrophilous strivings, but by no means the only one. Sometimes necrophilic trends can be expressed in marginal, unintended "insignificant" actions, the "psychopathology of everyday life," which Freud interpreted as an expression of repressed strivings. Here is an example taken from a very complex personality, that of Winston Churchill. The incident was the following: Field Marshal Sir Alan F. Brooke, Chief of the Imperial Staff, and Churchill were having lunch together in North Africa during World War II; it was a hot day and there were many flies. Churchill killed as many as he could, as most people would probably have done. But then he did something bizarre. (Sir Alan reports a feeling of being shocked.) Toward the end of the lunch he collected all the dead flies and lined them up in a row on the tablecloth, acting like an aristocratic hunter whose men line up all the animals taken, for his gratification. (Viscount Alanbrooke, 1957.)[13]

If one were to “explain” Churchill’s behavior as just a “habit,” the question would remain: What does this rather unusual habit *mean?* Although it seems to express a necrophilous trend, this does not necessarily imply that Churchill had a necrophilous character, but he might well have had a strong necrophilous streak. (Churchill’s character is much too complex to be discussed in a few pages.)

I have mentioned this behavior of Churchill because it is well authenticated and because his personality is well-known. Similar marginal behavioral details can be observed in many people. One of the most frequent is the habit of some persons to break and mutilate small things like matches or flowers; some hurt themselves by picking at wounds. The tendency is expressed more drastically when people injure something beautiful like a building, a piece of furniture and in extreme cases slash a painting in a museum, or inflict wounds on themselves.

Another illustration of necrophilous behavior can be found in people—especially medical students and physicians—who are especially attracted by skeletons. Such an attraction is usually explained by their professional interests, but the following report from psychoanalytic data shows that this is not always so. A medical student who had a skeleton in his bedroom told the analyst after some time and with great embarrassment that he often took the skeleton into his bed, embraced it, and sometimes kissed it. This same person showed a number of other necrophilous traits.

Another manifestation of the necrophilous character is the conviction that the only way to solve a problem or a conflict is by force and violence. The question involved is not whether force should be used under certain circumstances; what is characteristic for the necrophile is that force—as Simone Weil said, “the power to transform a man into a corpse”—is the first and the last solution for everything; that the Gordian knot must always be cut and never dissolved patiently. Basically, these persons’ answer to life’s problems is destruction, never sympathetic effort, construction, or example. Theirs is the queen’s answer in *Alice in Wonderland:* “off with their heads!” Motivated by this impulse they usually fail to see other options that require no destruction, nor do they recognize how futile has force often proved to be in the long run. We find the classic expression for this attitude in King Solomon’s judgment in the case of the two women who both claimed a child as her own. When the king proposes to divide the child, the true mother prefers to allow the other woman to have it: the

woman who pretends to be the mother chooses to divide. Her solution is the typical decision of a necrophilious, property-obsessed person.

A somewhat less drastic expression of necrophilia is a marked interest in sickness in all its forms, as well as in death. An example is the mother who is always interested in her child's sicknesses, his failures, and makes dark prognoses for the future; at the same time she is unimpressed by a favorable change, she does not respond to the child's joy or enthusiasm, and she will not notice anything new that is growing within him. She does not harm the child in any obvious way, yet she may slowly strangle his joy of life, his faith in growth, and eventually she will infect him with her own necrophilous orientation.

Anyone who has occasion to listen to conversations of people of all social classes from middle age onward will be impressed by the extent of their talk about the sicknesses and death of other people. To be sure, there are a number of factors responsible for this. For many people, especially those with no outside interests, sickness and death are the only dramatic elements in their lives; it is one of the few subjects about which they can talk, aside from events in the family. But granting all this, there are many persons for whom these explanations do not suffice. They can usually be recognized by the animation and excitement that comes over them when they talk about sickness or other sad events like death, financial troubles, and so forth. The necrophilous person's particular interest in the dead is often shown not only in his conversation but in the way he reads the newspapers. He is most interested—and hence reads *first*—the death notices and obituaries: he also likes to talk about death from various aspects: what people died of, under what conditions, who died recently, who is likely to die, and so on. He likes to go to funeral parlors and cemeteries and usually does not miss an occasion to do so when it is socially opportune. It is easy to see that this affinity for burials and cemeteries is only a somewhat attenuated form of the more gross manifest interest in morgues and graves described earlier.

A somewhat less easily identifiable trait of the necrophilous person is the particular kind of lifelessness in his conversation. This is not a matter of what the conversation is about. A very intelligent, erudite necrophilous person may talk about things that would be very interesting were it not for the way in which he presents his ideas. He remains stiff, cold, aloof; his presentation of the subject is pedantic and lifeless. On the other hand the

opposite character type, the life-loving person, may talk of an experience that in itself is not particularly interesting, but there is life in the way he presents it; he is stimulating; that is why one listens with interest and pleasure. The necrophilous person is a wet blanket and a joy killer in a group; he is boring rather than animating; he deadens everything and makes people feel tired, in contrast to the biophilous person who makes people feel more alive.

Still another dimension of necrophilous reactions is the attitude toward the past and property. For the necrophilous character only the past is experienced as quite real, not the present or the future. What has been, i.e., what is dead, rules his life: institutions, laws, property, traditions, and possessions. Briefly, *things rule man; having* rules *being; the dead* rule *the living.* In the necrophile's thinking—personal, philosophical, and political—the past is sacred, nothing new is valuable, drastic change is a crime against the "natural" order.[14]

Another aspect of necrophilia is the relation to color. The necrophilous person generally has a predilection for dark, light-absorbing colors, such as black or brown, and a dislike for bright, radiant colors.[15] One can observe this preference in their dress or in the colors they choose if they paint. Of course, in cases when dark clothes are worn out of tradition, the color has no significance in relation to character.

As we have already seen in the clinical material above, the necrophilous person is characterized by a special affinity to bad odors—originally the odor of decaying or putrid flesh. This is indeed the case with many such persons, and it manifests itself in two forms: (1) the frank enjoyment of bad odors; such people are attracted by the smell of feces, urine, or decay, and they tend to frequent smelly toilets; (2)—the more frequent form—the repression of the desire to enjoy bad odors; this form leads to the reaction formation of wanting to get rid of a bad odor that in reality does not exist. (This is similar to the overcleanliness of the anal character.) Whether of the one form or the other the necrophilic persons are concerned with bad odors. As noted earlier, their fascination with bad odors frequently gives such persons the appearance of being "sniffers." (H. von Hentig, 1964.) Not infrequently this sniffing tendency even shows in their facial expression. Many necrophilous individuals give the impression of constantly smelling a bad odor. Anybody who studies the many pictures of Hitler, for instance, can easily discover this sniffing expression in his face.

This expression is not always present in necrophiles, but when it is, it is one of the most reliable criteria of such a passion. Another characteristic element in the facial expression is the necrophile's incapacity to laugh. His laughter is actually a kind of smirk; it is unalive and lacks the liberating and joyous quality of normal laughter. In fact it is not only the absence of the capacity for "free" laughter that is characteristic of the necrophile, but the general immobility and lack of expression in his face. While watching television one can sometimes observe a speaker whose face remains completely unmoved while he is speaking; he grins only at the beginning or the end of his speech when, according to American custom, he knows that he is expected to smile. Such persons cannot talk and smile at the same time, because they can direct their attention only to the one or the other activity; their smile is not spontaneous but planned, like the unspontaneous gestures of a poor actor. The skin is often indicative of necrophiles: it gives the impression of being lifeless, "dry," sallow; when we sense sometimes that a person has a "dirty" face, we are not claiming that the face is unwashed, but are responding to the particular quality of a necrophilous expression.

The Necrophilic's Language

The language of the necrophilous person is characterized by the predominant use of words referring to destruction and to feces and toilets. While the use of the word "shit" has become very widespread today, it is nevertheless not difficult to discern people whose favorite word it is, far beyond its current frequency. An example is a twenty-two-year-old man for whom everything was "shitty": life, people, ideas, and nature. The same young man said proudly of himself: "I am an artist of destruction." We found many examples of necrophilous language while analyzing the answers to the questionnaire addressed to German workers and employees mentioned earlier (in chapter 2 and in chapter 8). The answers to one question: "What is your opinion about women's using lipstick and makeup?"[16] provides an illustration. Many respondents answered: "It is bourgeois," or "unnatural," or "not hygienic." They simply answered in terms of the prevalent ideology. But a minority gave such answers as "It is poisonous," or "It makes women look like whores." The use of these realistically unwarranted terms was highly indicative of their character

structure; almost invariably, the respondents who used these words showed a destructive trend in most other answers.

In order to test the validity of the hypothesis about necrophilia, Michael Maccoby and I designed an interpretative questionnaire basically on the lines of the one used in the Frankfurt study, but with fixed, rather than open-ended questions, twelve in all; some referred to attitudes typical of the anal-hoarding character, while others referred to the necrophilous characteristics I have described thus far. Maccoby applied the questionnaire to samples of people in six very different populations (as to class, race, and education). Space does not permit going into the details of the method or of the results obtained. Suffice it to say that analysis established (1) the presence of a necrophilous syndrome, confirming the theoretical model; (2) that life-loving and necrophilous tendencies could be measured; (3) that these tendencies were, in fact, significantly correlated with sociopolitical concerns. “On the basis of an interpretative analysis of the questionnaires, we judge that about 10 to 15 per cent of the samples interviewed would be dominantly necrophilous… Interviewers noted a sterility about many such people and their houses. They live in a deadened, joyless atmosphere…” (M. Maccoby, 1972.)

The study asked the respondents a number of questions that permitted correlating their political opinions to their character. I refer the reader to the great many data in Maccoby’s paper: I shall mention here only the following: “In all of the samples, we found that anti-life tendencies were significantly correlated to political positions that supported increased military power and favored repression against dissenters. The following priorities were considered most important by individuals who have dominant anti-life tendencies: tighter control of rioters, tighter enforcement of anti-drug laws, winning the war in Vietnam, controlling subversive groups, strengthening the police, and fighting Communism throughout the world.” (M. Maccoby, 1972.)

The Connection Between Necrophilia and the Worship of Technique

Lewis Mumford has shown the connection between destructiveness and power-centered “megamachines” as they existed in Mesopotamia and Egypt some five thousand years ago, societies that have, as he has pointed

out, much in common with the megamachines of Europe and North America today. He writes:

> Conceptually the instruments of mechanization five thousand years ago were already detached from other human functions and purposes than the constant increase of order, power, predictability, and above all, control. With this protoscientific ideology went a corresponding regimentation and degradation of once-autonomous human activities: "mass culture" and "mass control" made their first appearance. With mordant symbolism, the ultimate products of the megamachine in Egypt were colossal tombs, inhabited by mummified corpses; while later in Assyria, as repeatedly in every other expanding empire, the chief testimony to its technical efficiency was a waste of destroyed villages and cities, and poisoned soils: the prototype of similar "civilized" atrocities today. (L. Mumford, 1967.)

Let us begin with the consideration of the simplest and most obvious characteristics of contemporary industrial man: the stifling of his focal interest in people, nature, and living structures, together with the increasing attraction of mechanical, nonalive artifacts. Examples abound. All over the industrialized world there are men who feel more tender toward, and are more interested in, their automobiles than their wives. They are proud of their car; they cherish it; they wash it (even many of those who could pay to have this job done), and in some countries many give it a loving nickname; they observe it and are concerned at the slightest symptom of a dysfunction. To be sure a car is not a sexual object—but it is an object of love; life without a car seems to some more intolerable than life without a woman. Is this attachment to automobiles not somewhat peculiar, or even perverse?

Or another example, taking pictures. Anyone who has the occasion to observe tourists-or maybe to observe himself can discover that taking pictures has become a substitute for seeing. Of course, you have to look in order to direct your lens to the desired object; then you push the button, the film is processed and taken home. But *looking* is not *seeing.* Seeing is a human function, one of the greatest gifts with which man is endowed; it requires activity, inner openness, interest, patience, concentration. Taking a *snapshot* (the aggressive expression is significant) means essentially to transform the act of seeing into an object—the picture to be shown later to

friends as a proof that “you have been there.” The same is the case with those music lovers for whom listening to music is only the pretext for experimenting with the technical qualities of their record players or high-fidelity sets and the particular technical improvements they have added. Listening to music has been transformed for them into studying the product of high technical performance.

Another example is the gadgeteer, the person who is intent on replacing every application of human effort with a “handy,” “worksaving” contraption. Among such people may be numbered the sales personnel who make even the simplest addition by machine, as well as people who refuse to walk even a block, but will automatically take the car. And many of us probably know of home-workshop gadgetmakers who construct mechanically operated devices that by the mere press of a button or flick of a switch can start a fountain, or swing open a door, or set off even more impractical, often absurd, Rube Goldberg contrivances.

It should be clear that in speaking of this kind of behavior I do not imply that using an automobile, or taking pictures, or using gadgets is in itself a manifestation of necrophilous tendencies. But it assumes this quality when it becomes a *substitute* for interest in life and for exercising the rich functions with which the human being is endowed. I also do not imply that the engineer who is passionately interested in the construction of machines of all kinds shows, for this reason, a necrophilous tendency. He may be a very productive person with great love of life that he expresses in his attitude toward people, toward nature, toward art, and in his constructive technical ideas. I am referring, rather, to those individuals whose interest in artifacts has *replaced* their interest in what is alive and who deal with technical matters in a pedantic and unalive way.

The necrophilous quality of these phenomena becomes more clearly visible if we examine the more direct evidence of the fusion of technique and destructiveness of which our epoch offers so many examples. The overt connection between destruction and the worship of technique found its first explicit and eloquent expression in F. T. Marinetti, the founder and leader of Italian Futurism and a lifelong Fascist. His first *Futurist Manifesto* (1909) proclaims the ideals that were to find their full realization in National Socialism and in the methods used in warfare beginning with the Second World War.[17] His remarkable sensitivity as an artist enabled him to give expression to a powerful trend that was hardly visible at the time:

1. We intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness.
2. Courage, audacity, and revolt will be essential elements of our poetry.
3. Up to now literature has exalted a pensive immobility, ecstasy, and sleep. We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer’s stride, the moral leap, the punch and the slap.
4. We say that the world’s magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty; the beauty of speed. A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes, like serpents of explosive breath—a roaring car that semis to ride on grapeshot—is more beautiful than the “Victory of Samothrace.”
5. We shall sing a hymn to the man at the wheel, who hurls the lance of his spirit across the Earth, along the circle of its orbit.
6. The poet must spend himself with ardor, splendor, and generosity, to swell the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.
7. Except in struggle, there is no more beauty. No work without an aggressive character can be a masterpiece. Poetry must be conceived as a violent attack on unknown forces, to reduce and prostrate them before man.
8. We stand on the last promontory of the centuries!—Why should we look back, when what we want is to break down the mysterious doors of the Impossible? Time and Space died yesterday. We already live in the absolute, because we have created eternal, omnipresent speed.
9. We will glorify war—the world’s only hygiene—militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and scorn for woman.
10. We will destroy the museums, libraries, academies of every kind, will fight moralism, feminism, every opportunistic or utilitarian cowardice.
11. We will sing of great crowds excited by work, by pleasure, and by riot; we will sing of the multicolored, polyphonic tides of revolution in the modern capitals; we will sing of the vibrant nightly fervor of arsenals and shipyards blazing with violent electric moons; greedy railway stations that devour smoke-plumed serpents; factories hung on clouds by the crooked lines of their smoke; bridges that stride the rivers like giant gymnasts, flashing in the sun with a glitter of knives; adventurous steamers that sniff the horizon; deep-chested locomotives whose wheels paw the tracks like the hooves of enormous steel horses

> bridled by tubing; and the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd. (R. W. Flint, 1971. Italics added).

Here we see the essential elements of necrophilia: worship of speed and the machine; poetry as a means of attack; glorification of war; destruction of culture; hate against women; locomotives and airplanes as living forces.

The second *Futurist Manifesto (*1916*)* develops the idea of the new religion of speed:

> *Speed,* having as its essence the intuitive synthesis of every force in movement, is naturally *pure.* Slowness, having as its essence the rational analysis of every exhaustion in repose, is naturally *unclean.* After the destruction of the antique good and the antique evil, we create a new good, speed, and a new evil, slowness.
>
> Speed = synthesis of every courage in action. *Aggressive and warlike*.
>
> Slowness = analysis of every stagnant prudence. Passive and pacifistic…
>
> If prayer means communication with the divinity, *running at high speed is a prayer. Holiness of wheels and rails. One must kneel on the tracks to pray to the divine velocity. One must kneel before the whirling speed of a gyroscope compass:* 20,000 revolutions per minute, the highest mechanical speed reached by man.
>
> *The intoxication of great speeds in cars is nothing but the joy of feeling oneself fused with the only divinity. Sportsmen are the first catechumens of this religion. Forthcoming destruction of houses and cities, to make way for great meeting places for cars and planes.* (R. W. Flint, 1971. Italics added.)

It has been said that Marinetti was a revolutionary, that he broke with the past, that he opened the doors to a vision of a new world of Nietzschean supermen, that together with Picasso and Apollinaire, he was one of the most important forces in modern art. Let me answer that his revolutionary ideas place him close to Mussolini, and still closer to Hitler. It is precisely

this blending of rhetorical professions of a revolutionary spirit, the worship of technique, and the aims of destruction that characterize Nazism. Mussolini and Hitler were, perhaps, rebels (Hitler more than Mussolini), but they were not revolutionaries. They had no genuinely creative ideas, nor did they accomplish any significant changes that benefited man. They lacked the essential criterion of the revolutionary spirit; love of life, the desire to serve its unfolding and growth, and a passion for independence.[18]

The fusion of technique and destructiveness was not yet visible in the First World War. There was little destruction by planes, and the tank was only a further evolution of traditional weapons. The Second World War brought about a decisive change: the use of the airplane for mass killing.[19] The men dropping the bombs were hardly aware that they were killing or burning to death thousands of human beings in a few minutes. The aircrews were a team; one man piloted the plane, another navigated it, another dropped the bombs. They were not concerned with killing and were hardly aware of an enemy. They were concerned with the proper handling of their complicated machine along the lines laid down in meticulously organized plans. That as the result of their acts many thousands, and sometimes over a hundred thousand people, would be killed, burnt, and maimed was of course known to them cerebrally, but hardly comprehended affectively; it was, paradoxical as this may sound, none of their concern. It is probably for this reason that they—or at least most of them—did not feel guilty for acts that belong to the most horrible a human being can perform.

Modern aerial warfare destruction follows the principle of modern technical production,[20] in which both the worker and the engineer are completely alienated from the product of their work. They perform technical tasks in accordance with the general plan of management, but often do not even see the finished product; even if they do, it is none of their concern or responsibility. They are not supposed to ask themselves whether it is a useful or a harmful product—this is a matter for management to decide; as far as the latter is concerned, however, “useful” simply means “profitable” and has no reference to the real use of the product. In war “profitable” means all that serves the defeat of the enemy, and often the decision as to what is profitable in this sense is based on data as vague as those that led to the construction of Ford’s Edsel. For the engineer as well as for the pilot it is enough to know the decisions of management, and he is not supposed to question them, nor is he interested in doing so. Whether it

is a matter of killing one hundred thousand people in Dresden or Hiroshima or of devastating the land and people of Vietnam, it is not up to him to worry about the military or moral justification of the orders; his only task is to serve his machine properly.

One might object to this interpretation by stressing the fact that soldiers have always owed unquestioning obedience to orders. This is true enough, but the objection ignores the important difference between the ground soldiers and the bomber pilot. The former is close to the destruction caused by his weapons, and he does not, by a single act, cause the destruction of large masses of human beings whom he has never seen. The most one could say is that traditional army discipline and feelings of patriotic duty will also, in the case of pilots increase the readiness for unquestioning execution of orders; but this does not seem to be the main point, as it undoubtedly is for the average soldier who fights on the ground. These pilots are highly trained, technically minded people who hardly need this additional motivation to do their job properly and without hesitation.

Even the mass murder of the Jews by the Nazis was organized like a production process, although the mass killing in the gas chambers did not require a high degree of technical sophistication. At one end of the process the victims were selected in accordance with the criterion of their capability for doing useful work. Those who did not fall into this category were led into the chambers and told that it was for a hygienic purpose; the gas was let in; clothes and other useful objects such as hair, gold teeth, were removed from the bodies, sorted out and "recycled," and the corpses were burned. The victims were "processed" methodically, efficiently; the executioners did not have to see the agony: they participated in the economic-political program of the Führer, but were one step removed from direct and immediate killing with their own hands.[21] No doubt, to harden one's heart against being touched by the fate of human beings whom one has seen and selected, and who are to be murdered only a few hundred yards away within the hour requires a much more thorough hardening than is the case with the aircrews who drop bombs. But in spite of this difference the fact remains that the two situations have a very important element in common: the technicalization of destruction, and with it the removal of the full affective recognition of what one is doing. Once this process has been fully established there is no limit to destructiveness because nobody

destroys: one only serves the machine for programmed—hence, apparently rational—purposes.

If these considerations regarding the technical-bureaucratic nature of modern large-scale destructiveness are correct, do they not lead to the repudiation of my central hypothesis concerning the necrophilous nature of the spirit of total technique? Do we not have to admit that contemporary technical man is not motivated by a passion for destruction, but would be more properly described as a totally alienated man whose dominant orientation is cerebral, who feels little love but also little desire to destroy, who has become, in a characterological sense, an automaton, but not a destroyer?

This is not an easy question to answer. To be sure, in Marinetti, in Hitler, in thousands of members of the Nazi and Stalinist secret police, guards in concentration camps, members of execution commandos the passion to destroy is the dominant motivation. But were they not perhaps "old-fashioned" types? Are we justified in interpreting the spirit of the "technotronic" society as necrophilous?

In order to answer these questions some other problems need to be clarified which I have left out of this presentation thus far. The first is the connection between the anal-hoarding character and necrophilia.

The clinical data and the examples of the dreams of necrophiles have illustrated the marked presence of anal character traits. The concern with the process of elimination and with feces is as we saw, the symbolic expression of the interest in all that is decayed or putrid, all that is not alive. However, while the "normal" anal-hoarding character is lacking in aliveness, he is not necrophilous. Freud and his co-workers went a step further; they discovered that sadism was often a byproduct of the anal character. This is not always the case, but it occurs in those people who are most hostile and more narcissistic than the average hoarding character. But even the sadists are still with others; they want to control, but not to destroy them. Those in whom even this perverse kind of relatedness is lacking, who are still more narcissistic and more hostile, are the necrophiles. Their aim is to transform all that is alive into dead matter; they want to destroy everything and everybody, often even themselves; their enemy is life itself.

This hypothesis suggests that the development: normal anal character ———> sadistic character ———> necrophilous character is determined by the increase of narcissism, unrelatedness, and destructiveness (in this

continuum there are innumerable shadings between the two poles) and that necrophilia can be described as *the malignant form of the anal character.*

If this notion of the close connection between the anal character and necrophilia were as simple as I have described it in this schematic presentation, it would be neat enough to be theoretically satisfying. But the connections are by no means so neat. The anal character that was typical of the nineteenth-century middle class is becoming increasingly less frequent among the sector of the population that is fully integrated into the economically most advanced forms of production.[22] While statistically speaking the phenomenon of total alienation probably does not yet exist in the majority of the American population, it is characteristic of the sector that is most indicative of the direction in which the whole society is moving. In fact, the character of the new type of man does not seem to fit into any of the older categories, such as the oral, anal, or genital characters. I have tried to understand this new type as a "marketing character." (E. Fromm, 1947a.)

For the marketing character everything is transformed into a commodity—not only things, but the person himself, his physical energy, his skills, his knowledge, his opinions, his feelings, even his smiles. This character type is a historically new phenomenon because it is the product of a fully developed capitalism that is centered around the market—the commodity market, the labor market, and the personality market—and whose principle it is to make a profit by favorable exchange.[23]

The anal character, like the oral or genital, belongs to a period before total alienation has fully developed. These character types are possible as long as there is real sensuous experience of one's body, its functions, and its products. Cybernetic man is so alienated that he experiences his body only as an *instrument* for success. His body must look youthful and healthy; it is experienced narcissistically as a most precious asset on the personality market.

At this point we return to the question that led to this detour. Is necrophilia really characteristic for man in the second half of the twentieth century in the United States and in other equally highly developed capitalist or state capitalist societies?

This new type of man, after all, is not interested in feces or corpses; in fact, he is so phobic toward corpses that he makes them look more alive than the person was when living. (This does not seem to be a reaction

formation, but rather a part of the whole orientation that denies natural, not man-made reality.) But he does something much more drastic. He turns his interest away from life, persons, nature, ideas—in short from everything that is alive; he transforms all life into things, including himself and the manifestations of his human faculties of reason, seeing, hearing, tasting, loving. Sexuality becomes a technical skill (the "love machine"), feelings are flattened and sometimes substituted for by sentimentality; joy, the expression of intense aliveness, is replaced by "fun" or excitement; and whatever love and tenderness man has is directed toward machines and gadgets. The world becomes a sum of lifeless artifacts; from synthetic food to synthetic organs, the whole man becomes part of the total machinery that he controls and is simultaneously controlled by. He has no plan, no goal for life, except doing what the logic of technique determines him to do. He aspires to make robots as one of the greatest achievements of his technical mind, and some specialists assure us that the robot will hardly be distinguished from living men. This achievement will not seem so astonishing when man himself is hardly distinguishable from a robot.

The world of life has become a world of "no-life"; persons have become "nonpersons," a world of death. Death is no longer symbolically expressed by unpleasant-smelling feces or corpses. Its symbols are now clean, shining machines; men are not attracted to smelly toilets, but to structures of aluminum and glass.[24] But the reality behind this antiseptic facade becomes increasingly visible. Man, in the name of progress, is transforming the world into a stinking and poisonous place (and this is not symbolic). He pollutes the air, the water, the soil, the animals—and himself. He is doing this to a degree that has made it doubtful whether the earth will still be livable within a hundred years from now. He knows the facts, but in spite of many protesters, those in charge go on in the pursuit of technical "progress" and are willing to sacrifice all life in the worship of their idol. In earlier times men also sacrificed their children or war prisoners, but never before in history has man been willing to sacrifice all life to the Moloch—his own and that of all his descendants. It makes little difference whether he does it intentionally or not. If he had no knowledge of the possible danger, he might be acquitted from responsibility. But it is the necrophilous element in his character that prevents him from making use of the knowledge he has.

The same is true for the preparation of nuclear war. The two superpowers are constantly increasing their capacities to destroy each other, and at least large parts of the human race with them. Yet they have not done anything serious to eliminate the danger—and the only serious thing would be the destruction of all nuclear weapons. In fact, those in charge were already close to using nuclear weapons several times—and gambled with the danger. Strategic reasoning—for instance, Herman Kahn's *On Thermonuclear War* (1960)—calmly raises the question whether fifty million dead would still he "acceptable." That this is the spirit of neocrophilia can hardly be questioned.

The phenomena about which there is so much indignation—drug addiction, crime, the cultural and spiritual decay, contempt for genuine ethical values—are all related to the growing attraction to death and dirt. How can one expect that the young, the poor, and those without hope would not be attracted to decay when it is promoted by those who direct the course of modern society?

We must conclude that the lifeless world of total technicalization is only another form of the world of death and decay. This fact is not conscious to most, but to use an expression of Freud's, the repressed often returns, and the fascination with death and decay becomes as visible as in the malignant anal character.

Thus far we have considered the connection: mechanical—lifeless—anal. But another connection can hardly fail to come to mind as we consider the character of the totally alienated, cybernetic man: his *schizoid* or *schizophrenic* qualities. Perhaps the most striking trait in him is the split between thought-affect-will. (It was this split that had prompted E. Bleuler to choose the name "schizophrenia"—from Greek *schizo,* to split; *phren,* psyche—for this type of illness.) In the description of the cybernetic man we have already seen some illustration of this split, for instance in the bomber pilot's absence of affect, combined with the clear knowledge that he is killing a hundred thousand people by pushing a button. But we do not have to go to such extremes to observe this phenomenon. We have already described it in its more general manifestations. The cybernetic man is almost exclusively cerebrally oriented: he is a *monocerebral man.* His approach to the whole world around him—and to himself—is intellectual; he wants to know what things are, how they function and how they can be constructed or manipulated. This approach was fostered by science, and it

has become dominant since the end of the Middle Ages. It is the very essence of modern progress, the basis of the technical domination of the world and of mass consumption.

Is there anything ominous about this orientation? Indeed it might seem that this aspect of "progress" is not ominous, were it not for some worrisome facts. In the first place this "monocerebral" orientation is by no means only to be found in those who are engaged in scientific work; it is common to a vast part of the population: clerical workers, salesmen, engineers, physicians, managers, and especially many intellectuals and artists[25]—in fact, one may surmise, to most of the urban population. They all approach the world as a conglomerate of things to be understood in order to be used effectively. Second, and not less important, this cerebral-intellectual approach goes together with the absence of an affective response. One might say feelings have withered, rather than that they are repressed; inasmuch as they are alive they are not cultivated, and are relatively crude; they take the form of passions, such as the passion to win, to prove superior to others, to destroy, or the excitement in sex, speed, and noise. One further factor must be added. The monocerebral man is characterized by another very significant feature: a special kind of narcissism that has as its object himself—his body and his skill—in brief, himself as an instrument of success. The monocerebral man is so much part of the machinery that he has built, that his machines are just as much the object of his narcissism as he is himself; in fact, between the two exists a kind of symbiotic relationship: "the union of one individual self with another self (or any other power outside of the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them dependent on each other." (E. Fromm, 1941a.)[26] In a symbolic sense it is not nature any more that is man's mother but the "second nature" he has built, the machines that nourish and protect him.

Another feature of the cybernetic man—his tendency to behave in a routinized, stereotyped, and unspontaneous manner—is to be found in a more drastic form in many schizophrenic obsessional stereotypes. The similarities between schizophrenic patients and monocerebral man are striking; perhaps still more striking is the picture offered by another category not identical with yet related to schizophrenia, that of "autistic children." first described by L. Kanner (1944) and later elaborated by M. S. Mahler (1968). (See also L. Bender's discussion of schizophrenic children

[1942].) Following Mahler's description of the autistic syndrome, these traits are most important: (1) "a loss of that primordial differentiation between living and lifeless matter, that von Monakow called *protodiakrisis"* (M. S. Mahler, 1968); (2) an attachment to lifeless objects, such as a chair or a toy, combined with the inability to relate to a living person, particularly their mothers, who often report that they "cannot reach their children"; (3) an obsessive drive for the observation of sameness described by Kanner as a classical feature of infantile autism; (4) the intense desire to be left alone ("The most striking feature in the autistic child is his spectacular struggle against any demand of human, of social contact." [M. S. Mahler, 1968]); (5) The use of language (if they speak) for manipulative purposes, but not as a means of interpersonal communication ("These autistic children, with signals and gestures, command the adult to serve as an executive extension of a semi-animate or inanimate mechanical kind, like a switch or a layer of a machine." [M. S. Mahler, 1968]); (6) Mahler mentions one further trait that is of special interest in view of my foregoing comments on the decreased significance of the "anal" complex in the monocerebral man: "Most autistic children have a relatively low cathexis of their body surface, which accounts for their grossly deficient pain sensitivity. Along with this cathectic deficiency of the sensorium goes a lack of hierarchic stratification, of zonal libidinization and sequence." (M. S. Mahler, 1968.)[27]

I refer especially to the lack of differentiation between living and lifeless matter, the unrelatedness to other people, the use of language for manipulation rather than for communication, the preponderant interest in the mechanical rather than the living. Striking as these similarities are, only extended studies could establish whether there is a form of mental pathology in adults which would correspond to that of the autistic child. It is perhaps less speculative to think about a connection of the functioning of cybernetic man and schizophrenic processes. But this constitutes an extremely difficult problem, for several reasons:

1. The definitions of schizophrenia differ tremendously among various psychiatric schools. They range from the traditional definition of schizophrenia as an organically caused illness, to the various definitions to some extent common to the school of Adolf Meyer (Sullivan, Lidz), to Fromm-Reichmann, and to the more radical school of Laing, who do not define schizophrenia as an illness, but as a psychological process to be understood in terms of a response to the subtle and complex interpersonal

relations operating since early childhood. As much as somatic changes can be discovered, Laing would explain them as results, not as causes of the interpersonal processes.

2. Schizophrenia is not one phenomenon, but the term comprises a number of different forms of disturbances so that, from E. Bleuler on, one speaks of schizophrenias, rather than of schizophrenia as one disease entity.

3. The dynamic investigation of schizophrenia is of a relatively recent date, and until more investigative work has been done our knowledge of the schizophrenias will remain very inadequate.

One aspect of the problem which, I believe, is particularly in need of further elucidation is the connection between schizophrenia and other types of psychotic processes, especially those usually called endogenous depressions. To be sure, even an investigator as enlightened and advanced as Eugen Bleuler made a clear distinction between psychotic depression and schizophrenia, and it seems undeniable that the two processes by and large manifest themselves in two different forms (even though the need for many mixed labels—combining schizophrenic, depressive, and paranoid features—seems to make the distinction questionable). The question arises whether the two mental illnesses are not different forms of the same fundamental process, and on the other hand whether the differences among various kinds of schizophrenias are not sometimes greater than the difference between certain manifestations of the depressive and the schizophrenic processes, respectively. If that were so, we would also not have to be too much worried about an obvious contradiction between certain manifestations of the depressive and the schizophrenic processes, respectively. If that were so, we would also not have to be too much worried about an obvious contradiction between the assumption of schizophrenic elements in modern man and the diagnosis of chronic depression made earlier in connection with the analysis of boredom. We might hypothesize that neither label is fully adequate—or that we may just forget about the labels.[28]

It would indeed be surprising if the monocerebral cybernetic man did *not* offer a picture of low-grade chronic schizophrenic-to use the term for simplicity's sake-process. He lives in an atmosphere that is only quantitatively less than that shown by Laing and others in their presentation of schizogenetic (schizophrenia-producing) families.

I believe that it is legitimate to speak of an "insane society" and of the problem of what happens to the sane man in such a society. (E. Fromm,

1955a.) If a society produced a majority of members who suffer from severe schizophrenia, it would undermine its own existence. The full-fledged schizophrenic person is characterized by the fact that he has cut off all relations with the world outside; he has withdrawn into his own private world, and the main reason he is considered severely sick is a social one: he does not function socially; he cannot take care of himself properly; he needs in some way or other the help of others. (This is not entirely true, either, as experience has shown in all those places where chronic schizophrenics worked or took care of themselves, although with the help of certain people who arranged favorable conditions and at least some material contributions from the state.) A society, not to speak of a large and complex one, could not be run by schizophrenic persons. Yet it can be very well managed by persons suffering from low-grade schizophrenia, who are perfectly capable of managing the things to be managed if a society is to function. Such people have not lost the capacity to look at the world "realistically," provided we mean by this to conceive of things intellectually as they need to be conceived of in order to deal with them effectively. They may have lost entirely the capacity to experience things personally, i.e., subjectively, and with their hearts. The fully developed person can, for instance, see a rose and experience it as warming or even fiery (if he puts this experience into words we call him a poet), but he also knows that the rose—in the realm of physical reality—does not warm as fire does. Modern man experiences the world *only* in terms of practical ends. But his defect is not smaller than that of the so-called sick person who can not experience the world "objectively," but who has retained the other human faculty of personal, subjective, symbolic experience.

Spinoza, in his *Ethics*, was, I believe, the first one to express the concept of "normal" insanity:

> Many people are seized by one and the same affect with great consistency. All his senses are so strongly affected by one object that he believes this object to be present even if it is not. If this happens while the person is awake, the person is believed to be insane… But if the *greedy* person thinks only of money and possessions, the *ambitious* one only of fame, one does not think of them as being insane, but only as annoying; generally one has contempt for them. But *factually*

> greediness, ambition, and so forth are forms of insanity, although usually one does not think of them as “illness.” (B. de Spinoza, 1927.)

The change from the seventeenth century to our time becomes apparent in the fact that an attitude which Spinoza says one “generally … has contempt for” is considered today not contemptuous but laudable.

We must take one more step. The “pathology of normalcy” (E. Fromm, 1955a) rarely deteriorates to graver forms of mental illness because society produces the antidote against such deterioration. When pathological processes become socially patterned, they lose their individual character. On the contrary, the sick individual finds himself at home with all other similarly sick individuals. The whole culture is geared to this kind of pathology and arranges the means to give satisfactions which fit the pathology. The result is that the average individual does not experience the separateness and isolation the fully schizophrenic person feels. He feels at ease among those who suffer from the same deformation; in fact, it is the fully sane person who feels isolated in the insane society-and he may suffer so much from the incapacity to communicate that it is he who may become psychotic.

In the context of this study the crucial question is whether the hypothesis of a quasi-autistic or of low-grade schizophrenic disturbance would help us to explain some of the violence spreading today. We are here at the point of almost pure speculation, and further investigations and new data are needed. To be sure, in autism there is a good deal of destructiveness to be found, but we do not know yet where this category applies here. As far as schizophrenic processes are concerned, fifty years ago the answer would have seemed to be clear. It was generally assumed that schizophrenic patients are violent, and that for this reason they needed to be put in institutions from which they could not escape. The experiences with chronic schizophrenics working on farms or under their own management (as Laing arranged it in London) have demonstrated that the schizophrenic person is rarely violent, when he is left in peace.[29]

But the “normal” low-grade schizophrenic person is not left alone. He is pushed, interfered with, his extreme sensibilities are hurt, many times every day, so that indeed we could understand that this pathology of normalcy would engender destructiveness in many individuals. Least of all, of course, among those who are best adapted to the social system and most

of all with those who are neither socially rewarded nor have their place in a social structure meaningful to them: the poor, the black, the young, the unemployed.

All these speculations on the connection between low-grade schizophrenic (and autistic) processes and destructiveness must be left unresolved at this point. Eventually the discussion will lead to the question whether there is any connection between certain kinds of schizophrenic processes and necrophilia. But on the basis of my knowledge and experience I cannot go further than to raise the question in the hope that it might stimulate others to further studies. We must be satisfied with stating that the atmospheres of family life which have proven to be schizogenic, resemble very closely the social atmosphere which engenders necrophilia. One word, however, must be added. A monocerebral orientation is incapable of visualizing aims which further the growth of a society's members and its own survival. To formulate these aims reason is required, and reason is more than mere intelligence; it develops only when the brain and the heart are united, when feeling and thinking are integrated, and when both are rational (in the sense proposed earlier). The loss of the ability to think in terms of constructive visions is in itself a severe threat to survival.

If we stopped here, the picture would be incomplete and undialectical. Simultaneously with the increasing necrophilous development, the opposite trend, that of love of life, is also developing. It manifests itself in many forms: in the protest against the deadening of life, a protest by people among all social strata and age groups, but particularly by the young. There is hope in the rising protest against pollution and war; in the growing concern for the *quality* of life; in the attitude of many young professionals who prefer meaningful and interesting work to high income and prestige; in the widespread search for spiritual values—misguided and naive though it often is. This protest is also to be understood in the attraction to drugs among the young, despite their mistaken attempt to attain greater aliveness by using the methods of the consumer society. The anti-necrophilous tendencies have also manifested themselves in the many politico-human conversions that have taken place in connection with the Vietnam war, Such cases show that although the love for life can be deeply repressed, what is *repressed* is not *dead.* Love of life is so much a biologically given quality in man that one should assume that, aside from a small minority, it can always come to the fore, although usually only under special personal and

historical circumstances. (It can happen in the psychoanalytic process, too.) Indeed, the presence and even the increase of anti-necrophilous tendencies is the one hope we have that the great experiment, *Homo sapiens,* will not fail. There is, I believe, no country where the chances for such reassertion of life are greater than in the technically most developed country, the United States, where the hope that more "progress" will bring happiness has been proved to be an illusion for most of those who have already had a chance to get a taste of the new "paradise." Whether such a fundamental change will happen, nobody knows. The forces working against it are formidable and there is no reason for optimism. But I believe there is reason for hope.

Hypothesis on Incest and the Oedipus Complex

As to the conditions that contribute to the development of necrophilia, our knowledge is still very limited and only further research will throw more light on this problem. We may safely assume that a very unalive, necrophilous family environment will often he a contributing factor in the formation of necrophilia. Lack of enlivening stimulation, the absence of hope, and a destructive spirit of the society as a whole are certainly of real significance for fostering necrophilia. That genetic factors play a role in the formation of necrophilia is, in my opinion, very likely.

In the following I want to present a hypothesis concerning what I believe may be the earliest roots of necrophilia, a hypothesis that is speculative even though it is based on the observation of a number of cases and supported by ample material from the fields of myth and religion. I believe it to be of sufficient importance to be worthy of presentation, providing its tentative character is kept in mind.

This hypothesis leads us to a phenomenon that seems, at first glance at least, to have little connection with necrophilia: the phenomenon of *incest* that has become so familiar through Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex. First we must take a brief look at the Freudian concept in order to lay the foundation for what follows.

According to the classic concept a little boy at the age of five or six chooses his mother as the first object of his sexual (phallic) desires ("phallic stage"). Given the family situation, this makes of his father a hated rival. (Orthodox psychoanalysts have greatly overrated the little boy's hatred of the father. Statements like: "When father dies I will marry mother,"

attributed to little boys and often quoted as proof of their death wishes, are not to be taken literally, because at this age death is not yet fully experienced as a reality, but rather as an equivalent of “being away.” Furthermore, although some rivalry with father exists, the main source of deep antagonism lies in the rebellion of the boy against patriarchal, oppressive authority. [E. Fromm, 1951a.] The contribution of “Oedipal hate” to destructiveness, is, in my opinion, relatively small.) Since he cannot do away with his father he becomes afraid of him—fearing, specifically, that father will castrate him, his little rival. This “castration fear” makes the boy give up his sexual desires for mother.

In normal development the son is capable of shifting his interest to other women, particularly after he has reached full sexual-genital development—about the time of puberty. He overcomes his rivalry with his father by identifying with him and particularly with his commands and prohibitions. The father’s nouns are internalized and become the superego of the son. In cases of pathological development the conflict is not resolved in this way. The son does not give up his sexual attachment to mother and in his later life is attracted by women who fulfill the function mother did. As a result he is incapable of falling in love with a woman of his own age and remains afraid of the threatening father or the father substitutes. He usually expects from the mother substitutes the same qualities mother once showed him: unconditional love, protection, admiration, security.

This type of mother-fixated men are well-known; they are usually quite affectionate and in a qualified sense “loving,” but they are also quite narcissistic. The feeling that they are more important to mother than father makes them feel that they are “wonderful,” and since they are already grown up and need not do anything in reality to establish their greatness; they are great because—and as long as—mother (or her substitute) loves them exclusively and unconditionally. As a result they tend to be extremely jealous—they must keep their unique position—and they are simultaneously insecure and anxious whenever they have to perform a real task; while they might not fail, their actual performance can never really equal their narcissistic conviction of superiority over any man (while having at the same time a nagging, unconscious feeling of inferiority to all). The type I have just described is the more extreme case. There are many mother-fixated men whole tie to mother is less intense, and in whom the narcissistic illusion of achievement is blended with realistic achievements.

Freud assumed that the essence of the tie to mother was the little boy's sexual attraction to her, and that hate of the father was a logical consequence. My observations, through many years, have tended to confirm my conviction that the sexual attachment to mother is generally not the cause of an intense affective bond. While limitation of space does not permit a full discussion of the reasons for this conviction, the following remarks may help to clarify at least one of its aspects.

At birth, and still for some time afterward, the infant's attachment to mother occurs in a mainly narcissistic frame of reference (although soon after birth the child already begins to show some interest in and response to objects outside himself). While physiologically the infant has his own independent existence, psychologically he continues an "intrauterine" life in some respects and to some degree. He still lives through mother: she feeds him, cares for him, stimulates him, and gives him the warmth—bodily and emotional—that is a condition for his healthy development. In the process of further development the infant's attachment to mother becomes warmer, more personal as it were; she changes from being a quasi-intrauterine home into a *person* for whom the child feels warm affection. In this process the little boy breaks through the narcissistic shell; he loves mother, even though this love is still characterized by lack of equality and reciprocity and colored by inherent dependency. At a period when the little boy begins to react sexually (in Freud's "phallic phase") the affectionate feeling for mother results also in erotic and sexual desire for her. However, the sexual attraction to mother is usually not exclusive. As Freud himself reports, for instance in the case history of Little Hans (S. Freud, 1909), sexual attraction to their mothers can be observed in little boys around the age of five, but at the same time they are equally attracted to girls their own age. This is not surprising: it is a well-established fact that the sexual drive as such is not closely bound to one object, but is rather fickle; what can make the relationship to *one* person so intense and lasting is its affective function. In those cases in which the fixation to mother remains strong after puberty and throughout life, the reason lies in the strength of the affective tie to her.

Indeed, the fixation to mother is not only a developmental problem of the child. To be sure the child is forced into an intense, symbiotic dependency on mother for obvious biological reasons. But the adult, while physically capable of shifting for himself, finds himself also in a helpless and powerless situation rooted, as we have shown earlier, in the conditions

of human existence. We only understand the power of the passion to cling to mother if we see its roots not solely in childhood dependence but in "the human situation." The affective tie to mother is so intense because it represents one of the basic answers to man's existential situation: the desire to return to "paradise" where the existential dichotomies had not yet developed—where man can live without self-awareness, without work, without suffering, in harmony with nature, himself and his mate. With the new dimension of awareness (the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), conflict comes into existence and man—male and female—is cursed. Man is driven from paradise and not permitted to return. Is it not astonishing that he never loses his desire to return, even though he "knows" that he cannot do so since he is burdened with the fact of being man?

The sexual aspect of the attraction to mother is itself a positive sign. It shows that mother has become a person, a woman, and that the boy is already a little man. The particular intensity of the sexual attraction to be found in some instances may be considered a defense against a more infantile passive dependency. In those situations in which the incestuous tie to mother is not resolved around the time of puberty[30] and lasts throughout life, we deal with a neurotic development; the male will remain dependent on mother or her substitutes, afraid of women, and more of a child than any adult should be for his own good. Such a development is often caused by a mother who for any number of reasons—such as lack of love for her husband, or narcissistic pride in or possessiveness of *her* son—is overattracted to her little boy and in many different ways (pampering, overprotectiveness, overadmiration, etc.) seduces him to become overattracted to her.[31]

This warm, erotically and often sexually tinged tie to mother is what Freud had in mind when he described the Oedipus complex. While this type of incestuous fixation is most frequent, there is another, much less frequent kind of incestuous fixation that has very different qualities and may be called malignant. It is this type of incestuous fixation that, in my hypothesis, is related to necrophilia—in fact it may be considered one of its earliest roots.

I am speaking of children in whom no affective bonds toward mother emerge to break through the shell of autistic self-sufficiency. We are familiar with extreme forms of such self-sufficiency in the case of autistic children.[32] These children never break out of the shell of their narcissism:

they never experience the mother as a love object; they never form any affective attachment to others, but, rather, look through them as if they were inanimate objects, and they often show a particular interest in mechanical things.

Autistic children seem to form the one pole of a continuum—at the other pole of which we can locate children whose affection for mother and others is most fully developed. It seems a legitimate assumption that we find children on this continuum who are not autistic, but close to it, and who show the traits of autistic children in a less drastic way. The question arises: What happens to the incestuous fixation to mother in such autistic or near autistic infants?

It would seem that such infants never develop warm, erotic, and later, sexual feelings toward mother, or that they ever have a desire to be near her. Nor do they later fall in love with mother substitutes. For them mother is a symbol: a phantom rather than a real person. She is a symbol of earth, of home, of blood, of race, of nation, of the deepest ground from which life emerges and to which it returns. But she is also the symbol of chaos and death; she is not the life-giving mother, but the death-giving mother; her embrace is death, her womb is a tomb. The attraction to the death-mother could not be affection or love; it is not an attraction in the common psychological sense denoting something pleasant and warm, but in the sense in which one would speak of magnetic attraction, or the attraction of gravity. The person tied to mother by malignant incestuous bonds remains narcissistic, cold, unresponsive; he is drawn to her as iron is drawn to a magnet; she is the ocean in which he wants to drown,[33] the ground in which he wants to be buried. The reason for this development seems to be that the state of unmitigated narcissistic aloneness is intolerable; if there is no way of being related to mother or her substitute by warm, enjoyable bonds, the relatedness to her and to the whole world must become one of final union in death.

The double role of mother as goddess of creation and goddess of destruction is well documented in many myths and in religious ideas. The same earth from which man is made, the womb from which all trees and grasses are born, is the place to which the body is returned; the womb of mother earth becomes the tomb. A classic example for the double-faced mother goddess is the Indian goddess Kali, the giver of life and the destroyer. There are also the Neolithic Period goddesses with the same two

faces. It would take too much space to cite the many other examples of the double role of the mother goddesses. One more datum presenting the same double function of mother should be mentioned however: the double face of the mother image in dreams. While mother may often appear in dreams as the benevolent, all-loving figure, in the dreams of many persons she is symbolized as a dangerous snake, a quick-striking, dangerous animal, such as a lion, a tiger, or a hyena. I have found clinically that the fear of the destructive mother is by far more intense than of the punishing, castrating father. It seems that one can ward off the danger coming from father by obedience; but there is no defense against mother's destructiveness; her love cannot be earned, since it is unconditional; her hate cannot be averted, since there are no "reasons" for it, either. Her love is grace, her hate is curse, and neither is subject to the influence of their recipient.

In conclusion it can be stated that *benign incestuousness is in itself a normal, transitory stage of development, while malignant incestuousness is a pathological phenomenon that occurs when certain conditions inhibit the development of benign incestuous bonds.* It is the latter that I consider, hypothetically, one of the earliest roots, if not *the* root, of necrophilia.

This incestuous attraction to death, where it exists, is a passion in conflict with all other impulses fighting for the preservation of life. Hence it works in the dark and is usually entirely unconscious. The person with this malignant incestuousness will attempt to relate to people by less destructive bonds, such as sadistic control of others or the satisfaction of narcissism by gaining boundless admiration. If his life provides such relatively satisfactory solutions as success in work, prestige, etc., the destructiveness may never be expressed overtly in any major ways. If, on the other hand, he experiences failures, the malignant tendencies will come to the fore and the craving for destruction—of himself and others—will rule supreme.

While we know a great deal about the factors causing benign incestuousness, we know little about the conditions responsible for infantile autism and, hence, malignant incestuousness. We can only speculate in different directions. We can hardly avoid the assumption that genetic factors must be involved; of course I do not refer to genes responsible for this type of incestuousness, but to the chill's genetically given disposition for coldness that would in turn be responsible for his failure to develop a warm attachment to mother. We would expect to find a second condition in the character of the mother. If she herself is a cold, rejecting, necrophilous

person, she would make it difficult for the infant to develop a warm, affectionate relationship to her. We must consider, however, that we cannot look at the mother and the child except in the process of their interaction. An infant with a strong disposition for warmth may either effect a change in mother's attitude or become warmly attached to a mother substitute: a grandmother or a grandfather, an older sibling, or whoever else may be available. On the other hand, a cold child may be influenced and changed to some degree by a mother of more than average warmth and concern. It is sometimes also difficult to discern the fundamental coldness of the mother toward the child when it is overlaid by the conventional features of a sweet and loving mother.

A third possibility is traumatic experiences in the first years of the child's life that created active hate and resentment to such a degree that the child "froze up," and thus malignant incestuousness developed. One must always be alert to such possibilities. But in searching for traumatic experiences it should be very clear that these must be rather exceptional. In the literature quoted above, a number of very valuable hypotheses as to the causes for the development of autism and early schizophrenia have been presented that stress particularly the defensive function of autism against an intrusive mother.

This hypothesis regarding malignant incestuousness and its role as an early root of necrophilia needs further study.[34] In the following chapter, the analysis of Hitler will offer an example of an incestuous fixation to mother, the peculiarities of which can best be explained on the basis of this hypothesis.

The Relation of Freud's Life and Death Instincts to Biophilia and Necrophilia

To conclude this discussion of necrophilia and its opposite biophilia (love of life), it may be helpful to present a brief sketch of the relation of this concept to Freud's concept of the death instinct and the life instinct (Eros). It is the effort of Eros to combine organic substance into ever larger unities, whereas the death instinct tries to separate and to disintegrate living structure. The relation of the death instinct with necrophilia hardly needs any further explanation. In order to elucidate the relation between life

instinct and biophilia, however, a short explanation of the latter is necessary.

Biophilia is the passionate love of life and of all that is alive; it is the wish to further growth, whether in a person, a plant, an idea, or a social group. The biophilous person prefers to construct rather than to retain. He wants to be more rather than to have more. He is capable of wondering, and he prefers to see something new rather than to find confirmation of the old. He loves the adventure of living more than he does certainty. He sees the whole rather than only the parts, structures rather than summations. He wants to mold and to influence by love, reason, and example; not by force, by cutting things apart, by the bureaucratic manner of administering people as if they were things. Because he enjoys life and all its manifestations he is not a passionate consumer of newly packaged "excitement."

Biophilic ethics have their own principle of good and evil. Good is all that serves life; evil is all that serves death. Good is reverence for life,[35] all that enhances life, growth, unfolding. Evil is all that stifles life, narrows it down, cuts it into pieces.

The difference between Freud's concept and the one presented here does not lie in their substance but in the fact that in Freud's concept both tendencies have equal rank, as it were, both being biologically given. Biophilia, on the other hand, is understood to refer to a biologically normal impulse, while necrophilia is understood as a *psychopathological* phenomenon. The latter necessarily emerges as the result of stunted growth, of psychical "crippledness." It is the outcome of unlived life, of the failure to arrive at a certain stage beyond narcissism and indifference. *Destructiveness is not parallel to, but the alternative to biophilia. Love of life or love of the dead is the fundamental alternative that confronts every human being. Necrophilia grows as the development of biophilia is stunted. Man is biologically endowed with the capacity for biophilia, but psychologically he has the potential for necrophilia as an alternative solution.*

The psychical necessity for the development of necrophilia as a result of crippledness must be understood in reference to man's existential situation, as I discussed earlier. If man cannot create anything or move anybody, if he cannot break out of the prison of his total narcissism and isolation, he can escape the unbearable sense of vital impotence and nothingness only by affirming himself in the act of destruction of the life

that he is unable to create. Great effort, patience, and care are not required; for destruction all that is necessary is strong arms, or a knife, or a gun.[36]

Clinical-Methodological Principles

I will close this discussion of necrophilia with some general clinical and methodological remarks.

1. The presence of one or two traits is insufficient for the diagnosis of a necrophilous character. This is so for various reasons. Sometimes a particular behavior that would seem to indicate necrophilia may not be a character trait but be due to cultural tradition or other similar factors.

2. On the other hand it is not necessary to find all characteristically necrophilous features together in order to make the diagnosis. There are many factors, personal and cultural, that are responsible for this unevenness; in addition, some necrophilous traits may not be discovered in people who hide them successfully.

3. It is of particular importance to understand that only a relatively small minority are *completely* necrophilous; one might consider them as severely pathological cases and look for a genetic disposition for this illness. As is to be expected on biological grounds, the vast majority are not entirely without some, even if weak, biophilous tendencies. Among them will be a certain percentage of people whose necrophilia is so predominant that we are justified in calling them necrophilous persons. By far the larger number are those in whom necrophilous trends are to be found together with biophilous trends strong enough to create an internal conflict that is often very productive. The outcome of this conflict for the motivation of a person depends on many variables. First of all, on the respective intensity of each trend; second, on the presence of social conditions that would strengthen one of the two respective orientations; furthermore, on particular events in the life of the person that can incline him in the one or the other direction. Then come the people who are so predominantly biophilous that their necrophilous impulses are easily curbed or repressed, or serve to build up a particular sensitivity against the necrophilous tendencies in themselves and others. Eventually there is the group of people—again only a small minority—in whom there is no trace of necrophilia, who are pure biophiles motivated by the most intense and pure love for all that is alive. Albert

Schweitzer, Albert Einstein, and Pope John XXIII are among the well-known recent examples of this minority.

Consequently there is no fixed border between the necrophilous and the biophilous orientation. As with most other character traits, there are as many combinations as there are individuals. For all practical purposes, however, it is quite possible to distinguish between predominantly necrophilous and predominantly biophilous persons.

4. Since most of the methods that can be used for discovering the necrophilous character have already been mentioned, I can be very brief in summing them up. They are: (a) minute observation of a person's behavior, especially what is unintended, including facial expression, choice of words, but also their general philosophy, and the most important decisions the person has made in his life; (b) study of dreams, jokes, phantasies; (c) evaluation of a person's treatment of others, the effect on them, and what kind of people are liked or disliked; (d) The use of projective tests like the Rorschach inkblot test. (M. Maccoby has used the test for the diagnosis of necrophilia with satisfactory results.)

5. It is hardly necessary to stress that severely necrophilous persons are very dangerous. They are the haters, the racists, those in favor of war, bloodshed, and destruction. They are dangerous not only if they are political leaders, but also as the potential cohorts for a dictatorial leader. They become the executioners, terrorists, torturers; without them no terror system could be set up. But the less intense necrophiles are also politically important; while they may not be among its first adherents, they are necessary for the existence of a terror regime because they form a solid basis, although not necessarily a majority, for it to gain and hold power.

6. Considering these facts, would it not be of great social and political significance to know what percentage of the population can be considered to be predominantly necrophilous or predominantly biophilous? To know not only the respective incidence of each group but also how they are related to age, sex, education, class, occupation, and geographical location? We study political opinions, value judgments, etc., and get satisfactory results for the whole American population by the use of adequate sampling techniques. But the results tell us only what *opinions* people have, not what their *character* is—in other words what the *effective* convictions are that motivate them. If we were to study an equally adequate sample, but with a different method that would permit us to recognize the driving and largely

unconscious forces behind manifest behavior and opinions, we would, indeed, know a great deal more about the intensity and direction of human energy in the United States. We might even protect ourselves from some of the surprises that, once they have happened, are declared to be unexplainable. Or is it that we are interested only in the energy that is needed for material production and not in the forms of *human* energy that is in itself a decisive factor in the social process?

[1]The Greek *nekros* means "corpse," the dead, the inhabitants of the underworld. In Latin, *nex, necs* means violent death, murder. Quite clearly *nekros* does not refer to death but to the dead, the corpse and the murdered (whose death was apparently distinguished from natural death). "To die," "death," has a different meaning; it does not refer to the corpse but to the act of dying. In Greek it is *thanatos,* in Latin *mors, morl.* The words "die" and "death" go back to the Indogermanic root *dheu, dhou.* (I am indebted to Dr. Ivan Illich for giving me extended material on the etymology of these concepts, from which I have quoted only the most important data.)

[2]In some countries it is customary to exhibit a portrait of the deceased on the grave.

[3]An unauthenticated story about Hitler describes a similar scene of his not being able to tear himself away from the sight of a decayed corpse of a soldier.

[4]In order to avoid misunderstandings I want to stress at the outset of this discussion that describing here the full-grown "necrophilous character" does not imply that people are either necrophilous—or not. The necrophilous character is an extreme form in which necrophilia is the dominant trait. In reality, most people are a blend of necrophilous and biophilous tendencies, and the conflict between the two is often the source of a productive development.

[5]According to R. A. Medvedev (Let History Judge, A. A. Knopf, New York, 1971) Lenin seems to have been the first to use the term "necrophilia" *(trupolozhestvo)* in this psychological sense. (V. I. Lenin, *Sochmeniia.)*

[6]Unamono remained under house arrest until his death a few months later. (H. Thomas, 1961.)

[7]A preliminary report of my findings appears in E. Fromm (1964a).

[8]On the basis of reviewing older case histories of people I had analyzed and case histories presented by younger psychoanalysts in seminars, or by those whose work I have supervised.

[9]Cf. the earlier example of a man's conscious wish to drown in the decay of his grandmother.

[10]Cf. the rich material on dirt and feces in J. G. Bourke (1913).

[11]Albert Speer, personal communication.

[12]I have quoted such dreams in *The Forgotten Language* (1951).

[13]The fact that Churchill's physician, Lord Moran, mentions the same incident in his diaries (Lord Moran, 1966) makes one assume that Churchill must have done this rather frequently.

[14]For Marx, capital and labor were not merely two economic categories. Capital for him was the manifestation of the past, of labor transformed and amassed into things; labor was the manifestation *of life*, of human energy applied to nature in the process of transforming it. The choice between capitalism and socialism (as he understood it) amounted to this: Who (what) was to rule over what (whom)? What is dead over what is alive, or what is alive over what is dead? (Cf. E. Fromm, 1961b, 1968a.)

[15]This color preference is similar to the one often found in depressed persons.

[16]In the early thirties this was a controversial point among this sector of the population, since many considered the use of makeup a bourgeois, unnatural habit.

[17]R. W. Flint (19711, the editor of Marinetti's work, tries to de-emphasize Marinetti's Fascist allegiance, but in my opinion his arguments are not convincing.

[18]This is not the place to analyze certain phenomena in modern art and literature in order to determine whether they exhibit necrophilous elements. In the area of painting, it is a problem outside my competence; as far as literature is concerned, it is too complex to be dealt with briefly; I plan to deal with this topic in a later book.

[19]The Battle of Britain at the beginning of the war was still fought in the old-fashioned style; the British fighter pilots engaged their German adversaries; their plane was their individual vehicle; they were motivated by the passion to save their country from German invasion. It was their personal skill, courage, and determination that decided the outcome; in principle, their fighting was not different from that of the heroes of the Trojan war.

[20]Lewis Mumford has pointed to the two poles of civilization, "mechanically organized work and mechanically organized destruction." (L. Mumford, 1967.)

[21]I should like to remind those who may say that this “one step” was too little to matter, that millions of otherwise decent people show no reaction when cruelties are committed many steps removed from them by their state or party. How many steps removed were the men who profited from the atrocities committed against the blacks in Africa by the Belgian administration at the beginning of this century? To be sure, one step is less than five, but it is only a quantitative difference.

[22]The studies undertaken by M. Maccoby on the character of managers in the United States (in the Harvard Project on Technology, Work, and Character; forthcoming) and by I. Millán on Mexican managers, *Carácter Social y Desarrollo* [*Social character and development*], National Autonomous University of Mexico; forthcoming) will doubtless help a great deal to confirm or question my hypothesis.

[23]This market is by no means entirely free in contemporary capitalism. The labor market is determined to a large extent by social and political factors, and the commodity market is highly manipulated.

[24]Cf. “Dream 7,” earlier in this chapter.

[25]It is a remarkable fact that the most creative contemporary scientists, men such as Einstein, Born, Heisenberg, Schrodinger, have been among the least alienated and monocerebral individuals. Their scientific concern has had none of the schizoid quality of the majority. It is characteristic of them that their philosophical, moral, and spiritual concerns have pervaded their whole personality. They have demonstrated that the scientific approach as such does not have to lead to alienation; it is rather the social climate that deforms the scientific approach into a schizoid approach.

[26]Margaret S. Mahler has applied the term “symbiosis” in her outstanding study of the symbiotic relationship between mother and child. (M. S. Mahler, 1968.)

[27]I am particularly indebted to David S. Schechter and Gertrud Hunziker-Fromm, among others; their sharing their clinical experiences and views on autistic children with me was especially valuable for me because I have not worked with autistic children myself.

[28]On the basis of such considerations, the Meyerian psychiatrists and Laing decline to use these nosological labels at all. This change has largely resulted from the new approach to the mentally ill. As long as one could not approach the patient psychotherapeutically, the main point of interest was the diagnostic label, useful for the decision of whether or not to put him in an institution for the mentally ill. Since one began to help the patient by psychoanalytically oriented therapy, the labels became unimportant, because the psychiatrist’s interest was focused on understanding the processes

going on in the patient, experiencing him as a human being who is not basically different from the "participant observer." This new attitude toward the psychotic patient may be considered an expression (if a radical humanism, which is developing in our tine in spite of the process of dehumanization that is predominant.

[29]The picture of autistic children is somewhat different. With them, in tense destructiveness seems to be more frequent. To account for the difference it might be helpful to consider that the schizophrenic patient has cut off his ties with social reality, hence does not feel threatened and in consequence prone to violence, if he is left alone. The autistic child, on the other hand, is not left alone. The parents try to make him play the game of normal life and intrude in his private world. In addition, by the age factor, the child is forced to keep his ties with his family and cannot yet afford, as it were, to withdraw completely. This situation may produce intense hate and destructiveness and account for the relatively greater frequency of violent tendencies among autistic children than among adult schizophrenic individuals if left alone. These speculations are of course very hypothetical and will need to be confirmed or rejected by specialists in this field.

[30]Initiation rites have the function of breaking this tie and marking the transition into adult life.

[31]Freud, in his respect for the conventions of bourgeois life, systematically exculpated the parents of his child patients from having done anything to harm the child. Everything, including incestuous desires, was supposed to be part of the infant's unprovoked phantasy. Cf. E. Fromm (1970b). This paper is based on a discussion held at the Mexican Institute of Psychoanalysis by a group consisting, aside from the author, of Drs. F. Narváez Manzano, Victor F. Saavedra Mancera, L. Santarelli Carmelo, J. Silva García, and E. Zajur Dip.

[32]Cf. E. Bleuler (1951); H. S. Sullivan (1953); M. S. Mahler and B. J. Gosliner (1955); L. Bender (1927); M. R. Green and D. E. Schecter (1957).

[33]I have seen a number of this type of incestuous patients with a longing to be drowned in the ocean, a frequent mother symbol.

[34]I intend to publish a longer, more documented version of what has been but briefly sketched here.

[35]This is the main thesis of Albert Schweitzer, one of the great representatives of the love of life—both in his writings and in his person.

[36]As shown in great detail in my discussion of Freud's theory of aggression in the Appendix, in his change from the older concepts to the new polarity: Eros-death instinct, Freud actually changed his

whole concept of instinct. In the older version, sexuality was a physiological, mechanistic concept aroused by excitation of various erogenous zones, and its satisfaction consisted in the reduction of the tension produced by the increasing excitation. The death and life instincts, on the contrary, are not attached to any particular bodily zone; they lack the rhythmic character of tension ———> de-tension ———> tension; they are conceived in biological, vitalistic terms. Freud never tried to bridge the gap between these two concepts; their unity was preserved semantically by the equation: life = eros = sexuality (libido). In the hypothesis proposed here, the older and the later phase of Freud's theory would be linked through the assumption that necrophilia is the malignant form of the anal character and biophilia is the fully developed form of the "genital" character. Of course, one must not forget that in my use of the terms "anal" (hoarding) and "genital" (productive) character, I have kept Freud's clinical description, but have given up the notion of the physiological roots of these passions.

13. Malignant Aggression: Adolf Hitler, A Clinical Case of Necrophilia

Preliminary Remarks

AN ANALYTIC PSYCHOBIOGRAPHICAL study aims at answering two questions: (1) What are the driving forces that motivate a person, the passions that impel or incline him to behave as he does? (2) What are the conditions—internal and external—responsible for the development of these specific passions (character traits)? The following analysis of Hitler has these aims, but it differs from the classic Freudian method in certain significant respects.

In the following analysis of Hitler's character I have only focused on Hitler's necrophilia and have only briefly touched upon other aspects such as his exploitative character and of Germany as a symbolic representation of the mother figure.

One difference that has already been discussed and hence needs to be mentioned here only briefly lies in the notion that these passions are not mainly of an instinctive or, more specifically, of a sexual nature. Another difference lies in the assumption that even if we know nothing of a person's childhood, the analysis of dreams, unintended behavior, gestures, language, and behavior that is rationally not fully explainable permits one to form a picture of the essential and mostly unconscious passions ("X-ray approach"). The interpretation of such data requires the particular training and skill of psychoanalysis.

The most important difference is the following: classic analysts assume that character development is finished around the age of five or six years, and that no essential changes occur afterward other than by the intervention of therapy. My experience has led me to the conviction that this concept is untenable; it is mechanistic and does not take into account the whole process of living and of character as a developing system.

When an individual is born he is by no means faceless. Not only is he born with genetically determined temperamental and other inherited dispositions that have greater affinity to certain character traits rather than to others, but prenatal events and birth itself form additional dispositions. All this makes up, as it were, the face of the individual at birth. Then he comes in contact with a particular kind of environment—parents and other significant people around him—to which he responds and which tends to influence the further development of his character. At the age of eighteen months the infant's character is much more definitely formed and determined than it was at birth. Yet it is not finished, and its development could go in several directions, depending on the influences that operate on it. By the age of six, let us say, the character is still more determined and fixed, but not without the capacity for change, provided new, significant circumstances occur that may provoke such change. Speaking more generally, the formation and fixity of the character has to be understood in terms of a sliding scale; the individual begins life with certain qualities that dispose him to go in certain directions, but his personality is still malleable enough to allow the character to develop in many different directions within the given framework. Every step in life narrows down the number of possible future outcomes. The more the character is fixed, the greater must be the impact of new factors if they are to produce fundamental changes in the direction of the further evolution of the system. Eventually, the freedom to change becomes so minimal that only a miracle would seem capable of effecting a change.

This does not imply that influences of early childhood are not as a rule more effective than later events. But although they *incline more,* they do not *determine* a person completely. In order to make up for the greater degree of impressionability of early age, later events have to be more intense and more dramatic. The impression that the character never changes is largely based on the fact that the life of most people is so prefabricated and unspontaneous that nothing new ever really happens, and later events only confirm the earlier ones.

The number of real possibilities for the character to develop in different directions is in inverse proportion to the fixity the character system has assumed. But in principle the character system is never so completely fixed that new developments could not occur as the result of extraordinary

experiences, although such occurrences are, statistically speaking, not probable.

The practical aspect of these theoretical considerations is that one cannot expect to find the character as it is, say, at the age of twenty to be a repetition of the character as it was at the age of five; more specifically, taking Hitler as an example, one could not expect to find a fully developed necrophilous character system in his childhood, but one could expect to find certain necrophilous roots that are conducive to development of a full-fledged necrophilous character as one of several real possibilities. But only after a great number of internal and external events have accrued will the character system have developed in such a way that necrophilia becomes the (almost) unchangeable outcome, and then we can discover it in various overt and covert forms. I shall try to show these early roots in the analysis of Hitler's character and how the conditions for the development of necrophilia increased at various stages of his development, until finally, there was hardly any other possibility left.

Hitler's Parentage and Early Years[1]

Klara Hitler

The most important influence on a child is the character of its parents, rather than this or that single event. For those who believe in the simplistic formula that the bad development of a child is roughly proportionate to the "badness" of the parents, the study of the character of Hitler's parents, as far as the known data show, offers a surprise: both father and mother seem to have been stable, well-intentioned people, and not destructive.

Hitler's mother, Klara, seems to have been a well-adjusted and sympathetic woman. She was an uneducated, simple country girl who had worked as a maid in the house of Alois Hitler, who was her uncle and future husband. Klara became Alois's mistress and was pregnant by him at the time his wife died. She married the widowed Alois on January 7, 1385; she was twenty-four years old and he was forty-seven.

She was hardworking and responsible; in spite of a marriage that was not too happy, she never complained. She fulfilled her obligations humanely and conscientiously.

> Her life was centered on the tasks of maintaining her home and caring for her husband and the children of the family. She was a model housekeeper, who maintained a spotless home and performed her duties with precision. Nothing could distract her from her round of household toil, not even the prospect of a little gossip. Her home and the furthering of the family interest were all-important: by careful management she was able to increase the family possessions, much to her joy. Even more important to her than the house were the children. Everyone who knew her agreed that it was in her love and devotion for the children that Klara's life centered. The only serious charge ever raised against her is that because of this love and devotion she was over-indulgent and thus encouraged a sense of uniqueness in her son—a somewhat strange charge to be brought against a mother. The children did not share this view. Her stepchildren and her own offspring who survived infancy loved and respected their mother. (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

The accusation that she was overindulgent to her son and encouraged a sense of uniqueness (read *narcissism*) in him is not as strange as Smith thinks—and furthermore it is probably true. But this period of overindulgence lasted only up to the time when Hitler ended the period of his infancy and entered school. This change in her attitude was probably brought about, or at least facilitated, by her giving birth to another son at the time Hitler was five years old. But her whole attitude during the rest of her life proves that the birth of the new child was not as traumatic an event as some psychoanalysts like to think; she probably stopped spoiling Adolf, but she did not suddenly ignore him. She was increasingly aware of the necessity for him to grow up, adjust himself to reality, and as we shall see, she did everything she could to further this process.

This picture of a responsible and loving mother raises some serious questions in view of the hypothesis of Hitler's quasi-autistic childhood and his "malignant incestuousness." How could Hitler's early development be explained under these circumstances? We can think of several possibilities: (1) that Hitler was *constitutionally* so cold and withdrawn that his near-autistic orientation existed in spite of a warm and loving mother. (2) It is possible that her overattachment to this son, of which we have evidence, was felt by the already shy child as a strong intrusion to which he reacted

by a more drastic withdrawal.[2] We do not know enough of Klara's personality to be sure which of these conditions prevailed, but they are compatible with the picture of Klara's behavior as we can construe it from the data we do have.

Another possibility is that she was a sad person, who was motivated by a sense of duty but conveyed little warmth or joy to her son. After all she did not have a happy life. As was usual in the German-Austrian middle class, she was expected to bear children, take care of the household, and subordinate herself to her authoritarian husband. Her age, her lack of education, his elevated social position, and his selfish—though not vicious—disposition, tended to intensify this traditional position. Thus she may have become a sad, disappointed, depressed woman perhaps as a result of circumstances rather than on the basis of her character. Finally it is possible that underneath her caring attitude was a deep-seated schizoid and withdrawn attitude. But this is the least likely of the possibilities. At any rate, we do not have enough concrete details about her personality to decide which of these hypotheses is most likely to be correct.

Alois Hitler

Alois Hitler was a much less sympathetic figure. Born as an illegitimate child, using his mother's name, Schicklgruber (changed much later to that of Hitler), starting with poor financial resources, he was a real self-made man. Through hard work and discipline he succeeded in rising from being a low official in the Austro-Hungarian customs service to a relatively high position—"higher collector of customs"—that clearly gave him the status of a respected member of the middle class. He was economical and succeeded in saving enough money to own a house, a farm, and to leave his family an estate which, together with his pension, provided for a financially comfortable existence. He was undoubtedly a selfish man who showed little concern for his wife's feelings, but apparently he was not too different in this from the average member of his class.

Alois Hitler was a man who loved life, particularly in the form of women and wine. Not that he was a woman chaser, but he was not bound by the moral restrictions of the Austrian middle class. In addition he enjoyed his glass of wine and may sometimes have had a glass too many, but he was by no means a drunkard as has been indicated in various articles.

The most outstanding manifestation of his life-loving nature, however was his deep and lasting interest in bees and beekeeping. He would with great pleasure spend most of his free time with his beehives, the only serious, active interest he had outside of his work. His life's dream was to own a farm where he could keep bees on a larger scale. He did eventually realize this dream; although it turned out that the farm he first bought was too big, toward the end of his life he owned just the right acreage and enjoyed it immensely.

Alois Hitler has sometimes been described as a brutal tyrant—I assume because that would fit better into a simplistic explanation of his son's character. He was not a tyrant, but an authoritarian who believed in duty and responsibility and thought he had to determine his son's life as long as the latter was not yet of age. According to the evidence we have, he never beat his son; he scolded him, argued with him, tried to make him see what was good for him, but he was not a frightening figure who struck terror in his son. As we shall see further on, his son's growing irresponsibility and avoidance of reality made it all the more imperative for the father to try to lecture and correct him. There are many data to show that Alois was not inconsiderate or arrogant to people, by no means a fanatic, and, on the whole, rather tolerant. His political attitude corresponds to this description: he was anticlerical and liberal, with much interest in politics. His last words just before he died of a heart attack while reading the newspaper were an angry expression against "those blacks" as the reactionary clericals were called.

How can we explain that these two well-meaning, stable, very normal, and certainly not destructive people gave birth to the future "monster," Adolf Hitler?[3]

From Infancy to Age 6 (1889-1895)

The little boy, it seems, was the apple of his mother's eye. She pampered him, never scolded him, admired him; he could do no wrong. All her interest and affection were concentrated on him. Her attitude very probably built up his narcissism and his passivity. He was wonderful without having to make any effort, since mother admired him anyway; he did not have to make an effort because mother took care of all his wishes. He in turn, dominated her and threw tantrums when he felt frustrated. But,

as we stated before, her overattachment may have been felt by him as an intrusion toward which he acted with increased withdrawal, thus laying the basis for his semi-autistic early attitude. This constellation was accentuated by the fact that his father, due to the particularities of his working conditions, did not spend much time at home. Whatever good the balancing influence of a male authority would have been, it was absent. The little boy's passivity and dependence may have been increased by a certain sickliness that, in turn, tended to increase the attention paid him by his mother.

This phase came to a close when Hitler was six. Several facts marked its end.

The most obvious, especially from the classic psychoanalytic standpoint, was the birth of a brother when Adolf was five, which removed Adolf from his position of mother's chief object of devotion. Actually, such an event often has a wholesome, rather than a traumatic influence; it tends to decrease the reasons for dependency on mother and the consequent passivity. Contrary to the cliché, the evidence shows that instead of suffering pangs of jealousy, young Hitler fully enjoyed the year after his brother's birth.[4] Largely responsible for this was the fact that his father took up a new post in Linz, while the family, apparently fearing to move the baby, stayed behind in Passau for a full year.

> For one whole year, Adolf lived in a five-year-old's paradise playing games and roughhousing with the children of the neighborhood. Miniature wars and fights between cowboys and Indians appear to have been his favorites, and they were to continue as his major diversions for many years. Since Passau was in Germany—on the German side of the Austro-German border, where the Austrian customs inspection took place—war games would have pitted French against German in the spirit of 1870, yet there was no particular importance in the nationality of the victims. Europe was full of heroic little boys who massacred all national and ethnic groups impartially. This year of childhood combat was important in Hitler's life not because it was spent on German soil and added a Bavarian touch to his speech, but because it was a year of escape into almost complete freedom. At home he began to assert himself more and probably displayed the first signs of consuming anger when he did not get his

> way. Outside play, without limit to action or imagination, reigned supreme. (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

This paradisiac life was abruptly ended when the father resigned from the customs service and the family moved to Hafeld, near Lambach, and his six-year-old son had to enter school. Adolf "found his life suddenly confined in a narrow circle of activities demanding responsibility and discipline. For the first time he was steadily and systematically forced to conform." (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

What can we say about the child's character development by the end of this first period of his life?

This is the period in which, according to Freudian theory, both aspects of the Oedipus complex are fully developed: sexual attraction to mother and hostility to father. The data *seem* to confirm the Freudian assumption: young Hitler was deeply attached to mother and antagonistic to his father; but he failed to solve the Oedipus complex by identifying himself with father through the formation of the superego and overcoming his attachment to mother; feeling betrayed by her by the birth of a rival he withdrew from her.

Serious questions arise, however, concerning the Freudian interpretation. If the birth of his brother when Adolf was five had been so traumatic, leading to the breaking of the tie to mother and replacing "love" for her by resentment and hate, why should the year after this event have been such a happy one—in fact probably the happiest period of his childhood? Can we really explain his hate of his father as a result of his Oedipal rivalry if we consider the fact that his mother's relationship to her husband seems to have been one of little intensity and warmth? Is it not rather to be understood as the antagonism to a father who demanded discipline and responsibility?

These questions would seem to find an answer in the hypothesis on malignant incestuousness discussed earlier. This hypothesis would lead to the assumption that Hitler's fixation to his mother was not a warm and affectionate one; that he remained cold and did not break through his narcissistic shell; that she did not assume the role of a real person for him, but that of a symbol for the impersonal power of earth, blood, fate—and death. However, in spite of his coldness, he was symbiotically attached to the mother figure and her symbolizations, the last aim of which is the union

with mother in death. If this was so, one could understand why the birth of a brother would not have been the cause for his withdrawal from mother. In fact, one could not even say that he withdrew from her, if it is true that affectively he had never felt close to her. Most importantly, one could understand that the beginning of Hitler's later manifest necrophilous development is to be found in the malignant incestuousness that characterizes his early relationship to his mother. This hypothesis would also explain why Hitler later never fell in love with motherly figures, why the tie to his real mother as a person was expressed by that to blood, soil, the race, and eventually to chaos and death. Germany became the central symbol for mother. His fixation to mother-Germany was the basis for his hate against the poison (syphilis and Jews) from which he had to save her, but, on a deeper level, of his long-repressed desire to destroy mother-Germany; his end seems to bear out the hypothesis of the malignant incestuousness.

Hitler's relationship to his mother and to mother figures was quite different from what we find in most other "mother-fixated" men. In these men the tie to mother is much warmer, more intense, one might say more real; such people have a strong desire to be near mother, to tell her everything; they are really "in love" with her (if "love" is properly qualified by its infantile nature). Later on in life they tend to fall in love with mother figures, that is to say, they are intensely attracted to them to the point of having love affairs with or marrying them. (Whether the root of this attraction is sexual or whether the sexual attraction is a secondary manifestation of the primary affective attraction is of no consequence at this point.) But Hitler was never attracted to his mother in this way, at least not after the age of five, and probably not even before; as a child he took pleasure exclusively in leaving the house to play soldiers or Indians with other boys. He had little interest in her, and did not care.

His mother was aware of this. Kubizek reports that she told him her son was irresponsible and wasting his small inheritance; that she had many responsibilities for her small daughter, "but Adolf does not think of this; he goes his way as if he were alone in the world." This lack of considerateness and concern for his mother characterized also his reaction to her illness. In spite of the cancer diagnosed and operated on in January 1907 and from which she died in December of the same year, he left for Vienna that September. His mother tried, out of concern for him, to understate how bad

she felt, and he accepted this, making no attempt to find out how she really was by visiting her in Linz—a trip that offered no problem as far as time or money was concerned—and he hardly wrote to her from Vienna to let her know how he was, thus causing her a good deal of worry. According to Smith he came home only after being notified of her death. According to Kubizek's report, when her illness had disabled her completely, she asked him to come and take care of her because there was nobody else available. He came at the end of November and took care of her for about three weeks until her death. Kubizek remarks on how surprised he was to see his friend cleaning the floor and cooking for his mother. Hitler even went so far in his interest in his eleven-year-old sister's welfare as to make her promise her mother that she would work diligently in school. Kubizek describes Hitler's attitude toward his mother in very sentimental terms, trying to show how deeply he loved her. But his testimony in this respect is not too credible: Hitler, as always, would have tried to make the most of this occasion to make a good impression; he could hardly have refused his mother's appeal, and three weeks was not a long time to perform the role of loving son. The description of this kindness and considerateness is in contrast to the whole of Hitler's behavior toward his mother, so that Kubizek's description is not very convincing.[5]

It seems that Hitler's mother never became to him a person to whom he was lovingly or tenderly attached. She was a symbol of a protecting and admiring goddess, but also of the goddess of death and chaos. At the same time she was an object for his sadistic control, arousing a deep fury in him when she was not fully obliging.

Childhood Ages 6 to 11 (1895-1900)

The change from early to late childhood was abrupt. Alois Hitler had retired from the customs service and hence had all the time he wanted to devote himself to his family and especially the education of his son. He purchased a house with nine acres in Hafeld, near Lambach. Young Hitler had to enter the small country school at Fischlam near Hafeld, where he did very well. He conformed with his father's demands, at least outwardly, but as Smith writes: "There were reservations. He was still able to manipulate his mother to a degree, and his temper could explode at any time against anyone." This kind of life must have felt unsatisfactory to the little boy, in

spite of the fact that there were no violent clashes with his father. But Adolf found for himself one area in life where he could forget all the regimentation and what he felt was *a lack of freedom.* This area was his continuing interest in playing Indians and soldiers with other boys. Already at this early age, “freedom” meant, for Hitler, irresponsibility, lack of constraint, and most importantly, “freedom from reality”; it meant also to control gangs. If one examines the meaning and function of these games for Hitler, one discovers that they were the first expression of the traits that were to develop increasingly in him as he grew older: the need to control, and a defective realism. Descriptively, these games appear to be very harmless and normal at this age; that they were not, we shall see later when we see that he remained addicted to them until an age when normal boys have outgrown this youthful pastime.

Some changes occurred in the family in the following years. Alois’s eldest son left home at the age of fourteen, to his father’s great annoyance, so that Adolf now had to assume the role of eldest son. Alois sold the farm and moved to the town of Lambach. Adolf continued his school in the relatively modern elementary school in Lambach, and there, too, he did very well and avoided any major confrontations with his often angry and disgruntled father.

In 1898 the family moved again, this time to a house in Leonding on the outskirts of Linz, and Adolf entered his third elementary school, in Linz. Alois Hitler seems to have felt more contented at the new place than ever before. He could take care of his bees on the half acre of land and talk politics in the tavern. Yet he remained a strict authoritarian and left no doubts about who was in control. Josef Mayerhofer, his best friend in Leonding, later said of him:

> “He was strict with his family, no kid gloves as far as they were concerned; his wife had nothing to smile about.” Mayerhofer emphasized, though, that the rough exterior was partly bluff and that the children were not physically abused. “He never touched him [Adolf]. I don’t believe that [he beat him], but he often scolded and bawled at him. ‘That miserable urchin!’ he used to say, ‘I’ll bash him yet!’ But his bark was worse than his bite. The boy stood in awe of him, though.” (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

This is not the picture of a brutal tyrant, but of an authoritarian, somewhat unapproachable father of whom the son was afraid; this fear may have been one of the sources of Hitler's submissiveness, of which we shall hear more later. But one must not take this awe-inspiring quality of the father out of context; a son who had not insisted so much on being left alone and on being irresponsible might have arrived at a friendlier relationship with this type of father who, after all, meant well and who was by no means a destructive man. The cliché about "hate against the authoritarian father" is sometimes as much overworked as that about the Oedipus complex.

Altogether the five years of elementary school went by much better than one might have expected. This was due to the factors already mentioned and to the realistic circumstances in school. He was most likely above the average intelligence of the other boys, was well treated by the teachers because of his superior family background, and got top grades without having to make much of an effort. Thus school work was really no challenge and did not seriously disturb his finely balanced system of compromise between rebelliousness and adaptation.

At the end of this period no conspicuous deterioration is visible as compared with its beginning, yet there were alarming features: he had not succeeded in overcoming his early narcissism; he had not moved closer to reality; he had not developed any active interests and instead had built for himself a magic realm of freedom and power. The first years in school did not help him to grow beyond where he had been when he entered school. But still, there was little open conflict, and on the surface he seemed to have adjusted himself well enough.

Preadolescence and Adolescence: Ages 11 to 17 (1900-1906)

Hitler's entry into secondary school *(Realschule)* and the years that followed until his father's death brought about a decisive turn for the worse and reinforced the conditions for his malignant development.

The decisive events in the next three years, until his father's death in 1903 are: (1) his failure in high school; (2) the conflict with his father who insisted that he become a civil servant, and (3) his losing himself increasingly more in the phantasy world of his games.

Hitler himself, in *Mein Kampf*, offers a plausible and self-serving picture of these events: he, the free and independent human being, could not

stand to be a bureaucrat, but wanted to become an artist; he rebelled against school, and did poor work in order to get his father to give him permission to become an artist.

If we examine the known data carefully, the picture that emerges is the reverse: (1) He did poorly in school for a number of reasons to be discussed presently. (2) His idea of becoming an artist was essentially a rationalization for his incapacity for any kind of disciplined work and effort. (3) His conflict with his father was not simply centered around his refusal to become a civil servant, but was due to his rejection of all demands of reality.

About the failure there can be no doubt, since it was rather drastic. Already in the first year he did so poorly that he had to repeat the whole year. In the following years he had to take extra examinations in some subjects in order to be allowed to go to the next class, and even at the end of the third year, he passed in Linz only under the condition that he would leave the school. As a result he entered high school in Steyr, but at the end of the fourth year, in Steyr, he decided not to continue his school career for one more year until graduation from *Realschule.* An incident at the end of his last school year is rather symbolic for his high school career. After receiving his certificate he went with his classmates to drink wine and, when he got home, discovered he had lost his certificate. He was still wondering what excuse he could make, when he was called to see the director of the school; the certificate had been found in a street; he had used it as toilet paper! Even granting that he was probably more or less drunk, this behavior expresses symbolically much of his hate and contempt for school.

Some of the reasons for Hitler’s failure in high school are more obvious than others. The most obvious is that in elementary school he had been in a superior position. Being above average in intelligence and talent and a good talker, he did not have to make a great effort to be superior to his classmates and to get excellent grades. In high school the situation was different. There the average intelligence was higher than in elementary school. His teachers were much better educated and demanded more; they were also not impressed by his social background, since it was not outstanding in the social composition of the high school students. Briefly, in order to succeed in high school one had to really work; the amount of work required was not backbreaking, but it was a good deal more than young

Hitler was accustomed to, was willing to do, or was capable of doing. For this extremely narcissistic boy who in elementary school was able to "succeed without trying," the new situation must have been shocking. It challenged his narcissistic manner of behaving and demonstrated that reality could not be handled as before.

This situation of failing in high school after successful years in elementary school is not rare; it often stimulates a child to change his behavior, to overcome—at least to some extent—his infantile attitude and to learn to make an effort. In Hitler's case the situation had no such effect. On the contrary, instead of taking a step toward reality he withdrew more into his phantasy world and away from closer contact with people.

Had his failure in high school been caused by the fact that most of the subjects dealt with in school were of no interest to him, he would have worked hard in those that did interest him; that this was not the case is evidenced by the fact that he did not even make a sufficient effort to get an outstanding grade in German history, a subject that roused his enthusiasm and excited him greatly. (The only good marks he got were in drawing—but since he had talent in art, he did not need to exert much effort.) This hypothesis is confirmed most clearly by the fact that in later life he was unable to make a sustained effort even in a field that was perhaps the only one that really interested him—architecture. The theme of Hitler's incapacity for systematic work, except under the influence of most pressing needs or when driven by his passions, will be dealt with later. It is mentioned here only to stress that his failure in high school cannot be explained by his "artistic" interests.

During these years in high school Hitler withdrew increasingly from reality. He had no real interest in anybody—his mother, father, or siblings. He dealt with them as his interest in being left alone made it opportune, but they were remote from him affectively. His only strong and passionate interest was in his war games with other boys, in which he was the leader and organizer. While these games had been quite appropriate for a boy of nine, ten, or eleven, they were peculiar for a boy in high school. Characteristic is a scene at his confirmation at the age of fifteen. A relative had kindly arranged a little party in honor of the confirmand, but Hitler was grouchy and unfriendly, and as soon as he could he ran off to play war with other boys.

These games had several functions. They gave him the satisfaction of being the leader and confirmed his conviction that by his persuasive power he could make others follow him; they increased his narcissism, and most importantly, they put the center of his life in phantasy, thus furthering the process of his withdrawal from reality, from real persons, real accomplishment, and real knowledge. Another expression of this attraction to phantasy was his ardent interest in the novels of Karl May. May was a German writer who wrote many fascinating stories about the North American Indians that had the color of reality, although the author had never seen any Indians. Virtually all boys in Germany and Austria read May's stories; they were as popular as James Fenimore Cooper's were in the United States. Hitler's enthusiasm for May's writings was quite normal for someone in the last years of elementary school, but, writes Smith:

> It took on more serious overtones in later years. For Hitler never gave up Karl May. He read him in adolescence and as a young man in his twenties. Even as Reich Chancellor, he continued to be fascinated by him, rereading the whole series on the American West. Furthermore, he never attempted to disguise or hide his enjoyment of, and admiration for May's books. In the *Table Talk* [H. Picker, 1963] he extolls May and describes how he enjoyed his work. He talked about him with nearly everyone his press chief, his secretary, his servant and his old party comrades. (B. F. Smith. 1967.)

My interpretation of this fact, however, differs from Smith's. Smith believes that since Hitler's childhood infatuation with May's novels was such a happy experience it was "a satisfying and necessary carry-over into a period when his early adjustments failed to solve the challenges of adolescence." While this may be true to some extent, I believe that it does not touch the main point. May's novels have to be connected with Hitler's war games and are an expression of his phantasy life. Although adequate enough at a certain age, that they continued to fascinate him suggest that they represent a flight from reality, a manifestation of a narcissistic attitude centered around one theme: Hitler, the leader, fighter, and victor. To be sure, the evidence of this is not sufficient to be convincing. But if one connects Hitler's behavior in these youthful years with the data from his later life, a pattern emerges: that of a highly narcissistic, withdrawn person for whom

phantasy is more real than reality. When we see the young Hitler at sixteen already so much given to phantasy life, the question that arises is: How could this withdrawn dreamer succeed in making himself the master of Europe—even though only for a while? The answer to this question must wait until we have progressed further in the analysis of Hitler's subsequent development.

Whatever the reason for his failure in the *Realschule* were, there can be little doubt about its emotional consequences for young Hitler. Here is a boy, admired by his mother, successful in elementary school, the leader of the boys' gangs, for whom all these unearned successes had been a confirmation of his narcissistic conviction of having outstanding gifts. With hardly any transition he finds himself in a situation of failure; he had no way of hiding his failure from his father and mother; his narcissism must have been badly wounded, his pride hurt. If he could have recognized that his failure had been caused by his incapacity to work hard, he might have overcome its consequences, since there is no doubt that he was more than sufficiently gifted to be successful in high school,[6] but his untouchable narcissism made such insight impossible. As a consequence, not being able to change reality, he had to falsify and reject it. He falsified it by accusing his teachers and his father of being the cause of his failure and by claiming that his failure was the expression of his passion for freedom and independence. He rejected it by creating the symbol of the "artist"; the dream of becoming a great artist was for him reality, and yet the fact that he did not work seriously to achieve his aim showed the phantastic character of this idea. Failure in school was Hitler's first defeat and humiliation, followed by a number of others; it is safe to assume that it must have greatly reinforced his contempt for and resentment of anybody who was a cause or a witness of his defeat; and this resentment could very well have constituted the beginning of his necrophilia had we no reasons to believe that its roots are to be found already in his malignant incestuousness.

The death of his father when Hitler was fourteen years old did not have an appreciable effect on him. If it were true, as Hitler himself wrote later, that his failure in school originated in the conflict with his father, once the brutal tyrant and rival had died, the hour of liberation should have been at hand. He would now have felt free, made realistic plans for his future, worked hard for their realization—and perhaps turned his affection once more toward his mother. But nothing of the kind happened. He continued to

live in the same fashion as before; he was, as Smith puts it, “little more than a composite of pleasurable games and dreams,” and could not find a way out of this state of mind.

We must now take another look at Adolf’s conflict with his father since his entry into the *Realschule*. Alois Hitler had decided that his son should attend high school; while Hitler showed little interest in this plan, he accepted it. The real conflict, according to his report in *Mein Kampf,* arose when his father insisted that he should become a civil servant. This wish was in itself quite natural, since the father was impressed by his own success in this field and felt that it would also be the best career for his son. When Hitler brought forward a counterproposal, that of wanting to become an artist, a painter, the father, according to Hitler, said, “No, never as long as I live.” Hitler then threatened to quit studying altogether, and when the father did not yield, “I silently transformed my threat into reality.” (A. Hitler, 1943.) This is Hitler’s explanation for his failure in school, but it is too convenient to be true.

> It coincides exactly with Hitler’s picture of himself as a hard and determined man who had managed to rise a long way by 1924 (when *Mein Kampf* was written) and would go on to final victory. At the same time, it is the basis for the picture of the frustrated artist who went into politics with the resolve to save Germany. Most important, it explains away his poor grades in *Realschule* and his slow maturation, while at the same time it makes his adolescence appear heroic—a difficult task for any politically conscious autobiographer. In fact, the story served the later Fuehrer’s purpose so well that one may well ask whether or not he invented the whole episode. (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

That the father wished his son to become a civil servant may very well have been true; on the other hand the father took no drastic measures to force his son. Nor did Hitler do what his older brother had done at the age of fifteen —show his independence and defy his father by taking the drastic step of leaving home. On the contrary, he adjusted himself to the situation and just withdrew more into himself.

In order to understand the conflict we must appreciate the father’s position. He must have observed, as the mother did, that his son had no sense of responsibility, did not want to work, and showed no interest. Being

an intelligent and well-intentioned man, his concern must have been not so much for his son to become a civil servant, but for him to become *somebody.* He must have sensed that the plan to become an artist was an excuse for further drifting and lack of seriousness. If his son had made a counterproposal—for instance, that he would like to study architecture, and proved his seriousness by getting good marks in school, the father's response might have been quite different. But Hitler did not make any proposal that would have shown his father that he was serious. He did not even ask to be allowed to take drawing lessons if he did well in school. That it was not defiance against father which made him do so poorly in school is clearly evidenced by his response to his mother's attempt to bring him back to reality. After his father's death, and having left the *Realschule*, he decided to stay at home "reading, drawing and dreaming. Comfortably established in the flat on the Humboldtstrasse [where his mother had now moved], he could afford to indulge himself. He tolerated the presence of young Paula [his five-years-younger sister] and his mother in his sanctuary because he could not get away from them without making the nauseating decision to leave home and go to work. However, they were not allowed to interfere, though his mother paid the bills and his sister cleaned up after him." (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

Klara was clearly worried about him and admonished him to be more serious. She did not insist on a civil service career, but tried to help him establish a serious interest in something. She sent him to an art school in Munich. He staved there for a few months, but that was all. Hitler liked to dress elegantly, and his mother "paid for the clothes which turned him into something of a dandy, perhaps in the hope that this would serve as a bridge to wider social horizons. If this was her plan, it failed completely. The clothes merely served as symbols of independence and self-sufficient isolation." (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

Klara made another attempt to revive Hitler's interest. She gave him the money to visit Vienna for four weeks. He sent her some postcards-raving about "the mighty majesty," "dignity," and "grandeur" of the buildings. His spelling and punctuation, however, were well below the standard one would expect of a seventeen-year-old who had completed four years in high school. His mother permitted him to take music lessons (his father had suggested some years before that he take singing lessons), which Hitler did—for about four months, ending them at the beginning of 1907.

He quit because he disliked practicing scales, although the lessons might have stopped anyway because the onset of his mother's serious illness forced the family to reduce expenses.

His response to his mother's by no means authoritarian—and almost psychotherapeautic—attempts to awaken his interest in something real shows that his negative reaction to his father had not only been defiance against the demand that he become a civil servant, but the reaction of a withdrawn, drifting boy against a man who represented reality and responsibility. This was the core of the conflict—it was not simply dislike for the civil service, and even less was it an Oedipal rivalry.

Hitler's tendency to loaf and to avoid hard—or even not so hard—work requires an explanation. It will help us if we keep in mind the well-established observation that this kind of behavior is frequently to be found among mother-bound children. It is their often unconscious expectation that mother will do everything for them, just as she did when they were infants. They feel that they do not have to make an active effort, that they do not have to keep order: they can let their things lie around expecting mother to clean up after them. They live in a kind of "paradise" where nothing is expected of them and everything is provided for. I believe this explanation holds true in Hitler's case, too. In my judgment it does not contradict the hypothesis regarding the cold and impersonal character of his tie to mother. She fulfills this function qua mother, even though she is not loved or cared for in a personal way.

The description of Hitler's laziness in school, his incapacity for serious work, and his refusal to continue his studies will suggest a question to quite a few readers: What is so remarkable about it? There are a large number of high school dropouts today, many of whom complain about the pedantic and sterile nature of school work, who have plans for a free life not hobbled by fatherly and other authorities. Yet they are not necrophilous individuals; on the contrary, many represent a genuine life-loving, independent, frank type of personality. Some readers may even question whether my description of Hitler's failure is not written in a very conservative spirit.

To such objections I would like to answer: (1) There are, of course, many kinds of dropouts, and no general statement can be made about them; rather each different type of dropout can only be dealt with in specific terms. (2) In contrast to today, dropouts were extremely rare when Hitler was an adolescent; hence, there was no pattern to follow that might make it

easy for an individual to become a dropout. (3) Much more decisive than the foregoing reasons is one that applies to Hitler specifically: he was not only not interested in his school subjects; he was also uninterested in *everything.* He did not work hard at anything—either then or later. (We shall see this in his lack of effort in the study of architecture.) That he was lazy was not because he was a person who was satisfied with enjoying life without being specially concerned with achieving a goal. On the contrary he was filled with a burning ambition for power; endowed with extraordinary vital energy, he was tense and almost incapable of any quiet enjoyment. This does not fit the picture presented by most dropouts; and those dropouts who fit Hitler's picture, if they simultaneously show an ardent wish for power and complete lack of affection for anyone, constitute a very serious problem—in fact, a serious danger.

As for possible objection that I am being "conservative" in my attitudes when I insist that lack of capacity to work and lack of responsibility are negative qualities, this brings us to consideration of a crucial point in present-day youthful radicalism. It is one thing for a person to be uninterested in certain subjects or to prefer certain others or to reject school altogether. But to avoid responsibility and serious effort constitutes certain failure in the process of growth, a fact that is not changed by putting the blame on society. And anyone who thinks that loafing qualifies one as a revolutionary is thoroughly mistaken. Effort, devotion, concentration are of the essence in a fully developed person, including the revolutionary; young people who think differently might do well to think about the personalities of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Mao Tse-tung—each of whom shares with the other two vital qualities: a capacity for hard work and a sense of responsibility.

Vienna (1907-1913)

At the beginning of 1907 Hitler's mother made it financially possible for him to move to Vienna to study painting at the Academy of Arts. With this move Hitler was finally independent; free from the pressure of his father; he could plan and act as he liked. He did not even have to cope with financial problems, since the inheritance from his father and the pension the state paid orphans of deceased officials allowed him to live comfortably for

some time.[7] He stayed in Vienna from 1907 to 1913, from late adolescence to early manhood.

What did he make of himself in this decisive period?

To begin with he made the situation in Vienna easier for himself by persuading his companion of the last years in Linz, A. Kubizek, to join him there. Kubizek himself was most eager to go: but to win over Kubizek's father, who was dead set against his son's artistic plans, was no small feat, and it was one of the earlier demonstrations of Hitler's persuasive powers. Kubizek was, like Hitler, an ardent admirer of Wagner's music, and because of this shared enthusiasm they had met at the Linz opera house and become fast friends. Kubizek worked as an apprentice in his father's upholstery shop, but he, too, had great dreams: he also wanted to become an artist, a musician. He was more responsible and industrious than Hitler, but a less weighty personality. Thus, he soon came under Hitler's dominant influence. Hitler practiced on him his power to influence people; he received the complete admiration of his friend and thus a constant affirmation of his narcissism. In many respects his friendship provided Hitler with a substitute for the satisfaction the games with boys' gangs had given him: to be the leader and to be admired.

Shortly after his arrival in Vienna Hitler went to the Academy of Arts and registered for the yearly examination. He apparently had no doubt that he would be accepted. However, he failed; he was rejected in the second part of the examination, after having passed the first part. (W. Maser, 1971.) As Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf:* "When I received my rejection it struck me as a bolt from the blue." He reported that one of the professors at the Academy of Arts told him that he seemed to be more gifted for architecture than for painting. But even if this report is true, Hitler did not follow it up. He could have been admitted to the school of architecture if he had gone to *Realschule* for one more year; but there is no evidence that he ever seriously thought about it. Hitler's own report in *Mein Kampf is* insincere. He wrote that since he had no high school diploma the fulfillment of his wish to become an architect was "physically impossible." Then he went on to boast: "I wanted to become an architect but obstacles do not exist to be surrendered to but only to be defeated. I was determined to overcome these obstacles…" The facts are precisely the opposite:

> His personality and way of life prevented him from acknowledging his errors and accepting his rejection as a sign of the need for any change. His escapism was reinforced by his social affectations and his scorn for work which seemed dirty, degrading, or tiring. He was a confused and snobbish young man who had indulged himself for so long that he would neither work at an unpleasant task nor consider anyone except himself and the manner of life he enjoyed. His solution to rejection by the Academy was to go back to the Stumpergasse and settle down as if nothing had happened. In this sanctuary, he resumed what he grandly called his "studies," doodling and reading, with excursions around town or to the opera. (B. F. Smith, 1967.)

He pretended to everybody that he was enrolled as an art student at the academy, and even lied about this to Kubizek after the latter arrived in Vienna. When Kubizek eventually became suspicious because he could not understand how his friend could sleep late in the mornings and yet be a student, Hitler told him the truth in a violent outburst of rage against the professors at the art academy. He promised that he would show them, and study architecture by himself. His method of "studying" was to walk the streets, look at the monumental buildings, come home, and make endless sketches of the facades. The belief that in this way he was preparing himself to become an architect was a symptom of his lack of realism. He talked with Kubizek about his plans for the reconstruction of all Vienna or for writing an opera; he went to Parliament to listen to the debates of the Reichsrat; he applied a second time for acceptance at the Academy of Arts, this time he was not even admitted to the first test.

He had spent over a year in Vienna, doing no serious work, failing twice in the examination, still pretending that he was on the way to becoming a great artist. But in spite of the pretense, he must have felt that this year had brought him defeat. This defeat was much more severe than that in high school which he could explain by the idea that he intended to be an artist. When he failed as an artist no such explanation was available. He had been rejected in the very field in which he was sure that he would be great; nothing was left for him but to blame the art professors, society, the whole world. His resentment against life must have grown. His narcissism —even more than at the time of his first failure—must have driven him into

a still further withdrawal from reality in order to protect it from being shattered.[8]

At this point a process of almost complete withdrawal from people began that found its main expression in the fact that he drastically broke up the only close relationship he had: that with Kubizek. He left the room they shared, to which Kubizek was supposed to return after a visit at home, without leaving his new address. Kubizek remained out of touch with him until the time Hitler was already Reichschancellor.

The pleasant period of loafing, talking, walking, and sketching had gradually come to an end. Hitler had money left for less than one year, provided he would economize. Having no audience to talk to, he began to read more. Austria at that time had many political and ideological groupings centered around German nationalism, racism, "national socialism" (in Bohemia), and anti-Semitism. Each of these groups published its own pamphlets, preached its own ideology that was specific, and offered *the* solution. Hitler read these pamphlets avidly and acquired the raw material from which he later constructed his own brand of racism, anti-Semitism, and "socialism." Thus, while in this period in Vienna he did not prepare for the career of an artist, he did lay the foundations for his real future profession, political leader.

By the fall of 1909 his money had given out and he skipped his lodging without paying the rent he owed. The worst period began at this point. He slept on benches, sometimes in flophouses, and in December 1909 he joined the ranks of the real tramps, spending the nights in a place for destitute men that was sustained by a philanthropic society. The young man who had come to Vienna two and a half years before with the conviction that he would become a great artist had been reduced to the status of a homeless tramp, eager to get a bowl of hot soup, with no prospects of any kind and making no effort to support himself. Indeed, as Smith writes, his entry into the home for the homeless "was a declaration of utter defeat."

This defeat was one not only for Hitler the artist, but also for Hitler the proud and well-dressed bourgeois who had nothing but contempt for the lower classes. He had now become a bum, an outcast; he belonged to the dregs of society. This would have been an intense humiliation even for a less narcissistic member of the middle class. Since he was stable enough not to go to pieces, this situation must have strengthened him. The worst had

happened, and he emerged toughened, his narcissism unbroken; everything depended now on wiping out the humiliation by taking revenge on all his "enemies" and devoting his life to the goal of proving that his narcissistic self-image had not been a phantasy but was reality.

This process can be better understood if we recall the clinical observations made earlier regarding the fate of extremely narcissistic persons who are defeated. Usually they do not recover. Since their inner, subjective, and the outer, objective reality are completely torn apart, they may become psychotic or stiffer from other severe mental disturbances; if they are lucky they may find some niche in reality—a minor job for instance, that permits them to hold on to their narcissistic phantasy while they blame the world and muddle through their lives without a major catastrophe. But there is another outcome open only to those who have special gifts; they can try to change reality in such a way that their grandiose phantasies are proved to be real. This requires not only talent but also historical circumstances that make it possible. Most frequently this solution is open to political leaders in periods of social crisis; if they have the talent to appeal to large masses and are shrewd enough to know how to organize them, they can make reality conform to their dream. Frequently the demagogue on this side of the borderline to a psychosis saves his sanity by making ideas that seemed "crazy" before appear to be "sane" now. In his political fight he is driven not only by the passion for power, but also by the need to save his sanity.

We must now return to where we left Hitler at the most desperate and miserable point in his life. This period did not last very long—perhaps two months—and at no time did he do any manual work, as he claims in *Mein Kampf*. His circumstances shortly began to improve, when an older tramp, Hanisch, befriended him: Hanisch was a sordid character, with a political outlook similar to Hitler's and an interest in painting.[9] Most importantly, he had a practical idea of how they could both avoid destitution: if Hitler would ask his family for a small sum to buy painting materials, he could paint postcards and Hanisch would sell them. Hitler followed his advice; with the fifty kronen he received he bought the material and a very much needed overcoat and moved with Hanisch to the Männerheim, a well-run men's hostel where he could use the large common room to paint in. Everything went well. He painted postcards and Hanisch peddled them; then came larger water colors and oils, which Hanisch sold to frame makers

and art dealers. There was only one problem: Hitler did not work too diligently; as soon as he had a little money be would stop painting and begin to spend his time talking politics with the other inmates of the home. Nevertheless he had a steady though small income. Eventually there was a quarrel with Hanisch whom Hitler accused of having sold a painting without giving him his share (50 per cent) of the price. He denounced Hanisch to the police for theft, and Hanisch was arrested. Hitler then continued the business on his own, painting and selling his own work (especially to two Jewish art dealers). This time he seems to have worked more systematically; he had become a small businessman; he lived economically and even saved a little money. One can hardly say that he had become a "painter" or an "artist" since what he did was mainly to copy from photographs and repeat those pictures which proved to have a demand on the market. He stayed on at the Männerheim; his position in the "Heim," however, had changed. He was now a *permanent* lodger, and this meant that he belonged to the small group of "permanents" who looked down on the "transients" as inferior to themselves, and who formed a respected elite within the system of the home.

There were probably several reasons for his decision to stay in the home. The least likely is that, as Maser stresses, it was cheaper. For the fifteen kronen per month he paid in the home he could have found an adequate private room. But a number of psychological reasons suggest themselves. Hitler, like many unrelated persons, was afraid of being alone. He needed to compensate for his inner aloneness by superficial contact with others. More than this, he needed an audience that he could impress; this was well provided by the Männerheim, most of whose tenants were marginal types, loners, who had somehow failed to achieve a more normal life. Hitler was clearly superior to them in intelligence and vitality. They had the same function as the boys' gangs and Kubizek had had. They permitted him to practice his capacity to impress and influence other people and, hence, to confirm his own sense of power. While he sat and painted he would interrupt himself and start to make violent political speeches, very much in the style for which he was later well known. The Männerheim became for him a training school for the career of political demagogue.

A crucial question arises when we consider Hitler's existence at this time: Had he not acquired the capacity for steady work, changing from a

lazy drifter to a somewhat prosperous small businessman? Had he not found himself and achieved a healthy mental balance?

On the surface healthy may look as if this was so. Perhaps it was a case of late maturation, but can one call it normality? If it had been, the detailed analysis of his emotional development would have been quite unnecessary. It would have been sufficient to state that after certain characterological difficulties in his youth Hitler had become, at the age of twenty-three or twenty-four a well-adjusted and mentally healthy man.

However if one examines the situation more thoroughly this interpretation is hardly tenable.

Here is a man with extraordinary vitality, a burning passion for greatness and power, with the firm belief that he would become a great painter or architect. What was the reality?

He had completely failed in this aim; he had become a small businessman; his power consisted in impressing a small group of loners whom he constantly harangued, without even succeeding in finding followers among them. Maybe if Hitler had been a smaller man with less vitality and less grandiosity, this solution would have pleased him, and he would have been satisfied in having achieved the permanent petty bourgeois existence of a commercial artist. But to imagine that of Hitler would be almost absurd. There had been only one change: the months of intense poverty had taught him to work—mediocre as his work was. But otherwise his character had not been changed—except, perhaps, in the sense of becoming more deeply engraved. He remained an extremely narcissistic man without any interest in anybody or anything, living in an atmosphere of half-phantasy and half-truth, with a burning wish to conquer, and filled with hate and resentment; he remained a man without any realistic goal, plan, or concept about how to realize his ambitions.

Munich

This aimlessness became evident in his sudden decision to break up his existence in the Männerheim and to move to Munich and enroll there in the Academy of Arts. He had almost no knowledge about the situation in Munich: least of all did he inquire whether there was a market for his paintings as there was in Vienna. He just moved there, having a little money saved to help him over the first months. The decision proved to be a

mistake. His dream of being admitted to the art academy in Munich failed to materialize. There was a smaller market for his paintings and, according to Smith, he was forced to hawk his pictures in beer halls and to sell them from door to door. According to Maser, Hitler's income tax declaration shows that he was earning about one hundred marks per month, which would have been comparable to his Viennese income. But the fact remains that in Munich he also remained a commercial artist who mainly did copy work. Hitler's dream of becoming a great painter had definitely failed, and with his small talent and lack of training there was no connection between even the best prospects in his painting career and his great hopes.

Is it surprising that the outbreak of the First World War was a godsend to him and that he thanked heaven for this event which at one stroke wiped out the necessity to decide what he wanted to do with his life? The war broke out just at the point when he could hardly avoid any longer the full realization of his failure as an artist, and it replaced his sense of humiliation with a feeling of pride in being a "hero." Hitler was a dutiful soldier, and though not promoted (except in a minor way), he was decorated for bravery and respected by his superiors. He was no longer an outcast; he was a hero fighting for Germany, for its existence and glory, and for the values of nationalism. He could indulge in his strivings for destruction and victory—but now the war was real, no longer the phantasy war of little boys; and perhaps he himself was more real during these four years than at any other time. He was responsible, disciplined, and quite a different man from the loafer of the days in Vienna. The war ended with what seemed to him to be his own latest failure: defeat and revolution. The defeat might still have been bearable, but the revolution was not. The revolutionaries attacked everything that was sacred to Hitler's reactionary nationalism, and they won; they were the masters of the day, particularly in Munich, where they created a short-lived "Räte Republik."

The victory of the revolutionaries gave Hitler's destructiveness its final and ineradicable form. The revolution was an attack on him, on his values, on his hopes, on his grandiosity in which he and Germany were one. His humiliation was all the greater since some of the revolutionary leaders were Jews, whom he had considered his archenemies for many years, and who made him be the hapless spectator of the destruction of his nationalist, petit bourgeois ideals. This final humiliation could only be wiped out by the destruction of all whom he held responsible for it. His hate, his thirst for

revenge were also directed against the victorious Allied powers who forced Germany to accept the Treaty of Versailles, but to a lesser degree than against the revolutionaries, and particularly the Jews.

Hitler's failures had grown by stages: as a high school student, a dropout from the middle class in Vienna, an art academy reject. Each failure caused a graver wound to his narcissism and a deeper humiliation than the previous one; in the same degree as his failures, grew also his indulgence in phantasy, his resentment, his wish for revenge, and his necrophilia that probably had its earliest roots in his malignant incestuousness. The start of the war had seemed to end the period of his failures, but it ended in a new humiliation: the defeat of the German armies and the victory of the revolutionaries. This time Hitler had the opportunity to transform his personal defeat and humiliation into a national and social defeat and humiliation, which thus enabled him to forget his personal failures. This time not *he* had failed and been humiliated, but Germany; by avenging and saving Germany he would avenge himself, and by wiping out Germany's shame he would wipe out his own. His aim now was to become a great demagogue, no longer a great artist; he had found the area for which he had a real gift and, hence, a real chance of success.

We do not have sufficiently detailed material up to this period to demonstrate the presence of strong manifest necrophilous trends in his behavior. We have only seen the characterological ground that *favored* the growth of such tendencies: his malignant incestuousness, narcissism, coldness, lack of interest, self-indulgence, lack of realism, which necessarily resulted in failures and humiliations. From 1918 on, since there is ample material available about Hitler's life, we can recognize the manifestations of his necrophilia with increasing clarity.

A Comment on Methodology

Some readers may object and ask: Do we need to prove Hitler's necrophilia? Is his destructiveness not a fact that is beyond question?

To be sure, we do not have to prove the reality of Hitler's extraordinarily destructive actions. But destructive *actions* are not necessarily manifestations of a destructive, necrophilous character. Was Napoleon a necrophile because he never hesitated to sacrifice his soldiers' lives for his personal ambition and vanity? Were the many political and

military leaders throughout history who ordered large-scale destruction all necrophiles? To be sure anyone who orders or condones destruction betrays that he has hardened his heart. Yet, depending on they motivations and circumstances, even a not-necrophilous general or political leader can order severe destruction. The question raised in this book is not concerned with *behavior,* but with *character. To* be more specific: the question is not whether Hitler *behaved* destructively, but whether he was motivated by an intense passion to destroy, a passion for destruction that was part of his *character,* this has to be proven, not taken for granted. A psychological study must make every effort to be objective, particularly so in the case of a person like Adolf Hitler. Even if Hitler had died in 1933, at a time before he had actually committed many overt acts of large-scale destruction, he could very probably have been diagnosed as a necrophilous character on the basis of a detailed analysis of his whole personality. The crescendo of destruction that grew starting with the conquest of Poland up to his orders to destroy most of Germany and its population would only be the final confirmation of the earlier characterological diagnosis. On the other hand, even if we knew nothing about his past up to 1933, many details of his later behavior justify the diagnosis of severe necrophilia, rather than only indicate that he was, in behavioristic terms, a man who caused much destruction. From a behaviorist standpoint this distinction between behavior and motivating forces is of course meaningless; if one wants to understand the dynamics of the whole person, however, and particularly his unconscious sector, it is essential. In Hitler's case the use of the psychoanalytic method is all the more important because he repressed the awareness of his necrophilous passion to an extraordinary degree and in many different ways.

Hitler's Destructiveness[10]

Hitler's objects of destruction were cities and people. The great builder, the enthusiastic planner of a new Vienna, Linz, Munich, and Berlin, was the same man who wanted to destroy Paris, level Leningrad, and eventually demolish all of Germany. These intentions are well authenticated. Speer reports that at the height of his success, after he visited the recently conquered Paris, Hitler remarked to him, "Wasn't Paris beautiful? … In the past I often considered whether we would not have to destroy Paris. But when we are finished in Berlin, Paris will only be a shadow. So why should

we destroy it?" (A. Speer, 1970.) In the end, of course, Hitler ordered Paris destroyed—an order that was not executed by the German commander of Paris.

The most extreme expression of his mania for destroying buildings and cities was his "scorched earth" decree for Germany in September 1944, in which he ordered that before the enemy should occupy German territory

> everything, simply everything essential to the maintenance of life would be destroyed: the ration card records, the files of marriage and resident registries, the records of bank accounts. In addition, food supplies were to be destroyed, farms burned down and cattle killed. Not even those works of art that the bombs had spared were to be preserved. Monuments, palaces, castles and churches, theaters and opera houses were also to be leveled. (A. Speer, 1970.)

This also meant, of course, that there would be no water, no electricity, no sanitary facilities—i.e., there would be epidemics, illness, and death for millions who could not escape. For Speer, not a necrophilous destroyer but a biophilous builder, this order opened up an abyss between himself and Hitler. Seeking the cooperation of a number of generals and party officials who were not driven by Hitler's lust for destruction, Speer risked his life to sabotage Hitler's orders. Due to his efforts and those of a number of other people as well as to a number of other circumstances, Hitler's scorched earth policy was never carried out.

Hitler's passion to destroy buildings and cities deserves particular attention because of its connection with his passion for building. One might even go so far as to say that his plans to rebuild cities were an excuse for first destroying them. But I believe it would be erroneous to explain his interest in architecture as *nothing but* a cover for his wish to destroy. His interest in architecture was probably genuine, and as we shall see later on, the only thing in life—apart from power, victory, and destruction—that genuinely interested him.

Hitler's destructiveness is also to be seen in his plans for the future of the Poles after his victory over them. They were to be culturally castrated; teaching was to be restricted to knowledge of traffic signals, some German, and, as to geography, the fact that Berlin is the capital of Germany; arithmetic was entirely superfluous. There was to be no medical care; low

living standards; all they were good for was as cheap labor and obedient slaves. (H. Picker, 1965.)

Among the first *human* objects to be killed were *defective* people. Hitler had already written in *Mein Kampf:* "Defective people [must] be prevented from propagating equally defective offspring… For if necessary, the incurably sick will be pitilessly segregated—a barbaric measure for the unfortunate who is struck by it, but a blessing for his fellowmen and posterity." (A. Hitler, 1943.) He translated these ideas into action by killing defective people rather than just isolating them. Another early manifestation of his destructiveness is the treacherous murder of Ernst Röhm (with whom he was seen chatting amiably only a few days before Röhm's death) and other S. A. leaders merely for reasons of political expediency (to reassure the industrialists and generals by exterminating the leaders of the "anticapitalist" wing of the movement).

Another expression of Hitler's indulgence in phantasies of unlimited destruction are his remarks on measures he would take if there were a mutiny, such as the one in 1918. He would immediately kill all leaders of opposing political currents, also those of political catholicism, and all inmates of concentration camps. He figured that in this way he would kill several hundred thousand people. (H. Picker, 1965.)

The main victims of physical destruction would be the Jews, Poles, and Russians. Let us deal only with the destruction of the Jews; the facts are too well-known to need elaboration here. It must be noted, however, that their systematic slaughter began only with the outbreak of the second World War. There is no convincing evidence that Hitler contemplated the annihilation of Jewry until shortly before then, although he may have kept his ideas secret; until that time it was the policy to promote the emigration of all Jews from Germany, and the Nazi government even made efforts to facilitate this emigration. But on January 30, 1939, he told Czechslovakian Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky quite frankly: "We are going to destroy the Jews. They are not going to get away with what they did on November 9, 1918. The day of reckoning has come." (H. Krausnick *et al.*, 1968.)[11] He made a less explicit statement before the Reichstag on the same day: "If the Jewish international financiers inside and outside Europe succeeded in involving the nations in another war, the result will not be world bolshevism and therefore a victory for Judaism; it will be the end of the Jews in Europe."[12]

The statement to Chvalkovsky is particularly interesting from a psychological standpoint. Here Hitler does not give any rationalizing explanation, such as that the Jews are a danger to Germany, but reveals one of his real motives: revenge for the "crime" of being revolutionaries committed by a small number of Jews twenty years earlier. The sadistic quality of his hate against the Jews was revealed by "certain remarks that he made about the Jews to his closest colleagues after the Party rally: "Out with them from all the professions and into the ghetto with them; fence them in somewhere where they can perish as they deserve while the German people look on, the way people stare at wild animals." (H. Krausnick *et al.*, 1968.)

Hitler felt that the Jews were poisoning the Aryan blood and the Aryan soul. In order to understand how this feeling is related to the whole necrophilous complex we must deal with a seemingly completely different concern of Hitler's: syphilis. In *Mein Kampf* he spoke of syphilis as being among "the most important vital questions of the nation." He wrote:

> Running parallel to the political, ethical, and moral contamination of the people, there had been for many years a no less terrible poisoning of the health of the national body. Especially in the big cities, syphilis was beginning to spread more and more, while tuberculosis steadily reaped its harvest of death throughout nearly the whole country. (A. Hitler, 1943.)

This was not true: neither tuberculosis nor syphilis constituted a major threat of the proportions Hitler attributes to them. But it is a typical phantasy for a necrophile: the fear of dirt and of poison and of the danger of being contaminated by them. It is an expression of, and simultaneously a defense against, the necrophilous attitude that experiences the outside world as dirty and poisonous. Most likely his hate against the Jews was rooted in this complex: Jews are foreigners: foreigners are poisonous (like syphilis); hence foreigners have to be eradicated. That the Jews were poisoning not only the blood but also the soul is only a further extension of the original notion.[13]

The more he sensed that victory was doubtful, the more Hitler the destroyer came fully into his own: for every step toward defeat many hecatombs had to die. Eventually it became time for the Germans

themselves to be destroyed. Already on January 27, 1942, over a year before Stalingrad, Hitler said. “If the German people are not ready to fight for their survival *(Selbstbehauptung)*, well, then they have to disappear *(dann soll es verschwinden).”* (H. Picker, 1965.) When defeat was unavoidable, he ordered this threatened destruction of Germany to begin-of her soil, buildings, factories, works of art. When the Russians were about to take Hitler’s bunker, the moment for the *grand finale* of destruction had come. His dog had to die with him, and his mistress Eva Braun, who had come to the shelter against his orders in order to die with him, would die there, too. Hitler, so touched by Fraulein Braun’s act of loyalty, rewarded her by contracting a legal marriage; the readiness to die for him was apparently the only act by which a woman could prove that she loved him. Goebbels also remained faithful to the man to whom he had sold his soul; he ordered his wife and their six small children to die with him. Like any normal mother, Goebbels’ wife would never have killed her children, and least of all for the flimsy propaganda reasons her husband gave her, but she had no choice; when Speer visited her for the last time, Goebbels made it impossible for her to talk alone with him, even for a minute. All she could say was that she was happy that her eldest son (from a previous marriage) was not there also.[14] Hitler’s defeat and death had to be accompanied by the death of those near him, by the death of the Germans, by the destruction of the world if he could have had his way. Total destruction was to be the background for his own destruction.

Let us return to the question whether one can explain Hitler’s acts as justified by traditional reasons of state: whether he was humanly different from any other statesman or general who starts a war and gives orders by which millions of persons are killed. In some respects Hitler was like many “normal” leaders of big powers, and it is rather hypocritical to declare his war policy unique, in the fact of what leaders of other powerful nations are on record as having done. What is special in Hitler’s case is the disproportionality between the destruction he ordered and the realistic reasons for it. His actions, from the killing of many millions of Jews, Russians, and Poles to the final order for the destruction of all Germans, cannot be explained as strategically motivated, but are the product of the passion of a deeply necrophilous man. This fact is sometimes obscured by putting the whole emphasis on Hitler’s destruction of the Jews, an emphasis that overlooks the fact that the Jews were only one of the many victims

Hitler wanted to destroy. To be sure, it is correct to say that Hitler was a Jew-hater, but it is equally correct to say that he was a German-hater. He was a hater of mankind, a hater of life itself. This will become even clearer when we look at Hitler in terms of other necrophilic manifestations that were dealt with in general terms in the earlier discussion of necrophilia.

Let us look first at certain spontaneous expressions of his necrophilous orientation. Speer reports Hitler's reaction to the final scene of a newsreel about the bombing of Warsaw:

> Clouds of smoke darkened the sky: dive bombers tilted and hurtled toward their goal: we could watch the flight of the released bombs, the pull-out of the planes and the cloud from the explosions expanding gigantically. The effect was enhanced by running the film in slow motion. Hitler was fascinated. The film ended with a montage showing a plane divine toward the outlines of the British Isles. A burst of flames followed, and the island flew into the air in tatters. Hitler's enthusiasm was unbounded. "That is what will happen to them!" he cried out, carried away. "That is how we will annihilate them!" (A. Speer, 1970.)

Hanfstaengl reports a conversation held in the middle of the twenties in which he tried to persuade Hitler to visit England; he told Hitler of the interesting sights there and mentioned Henry VIII. Hitler responded: "Six wives—hm, six wives—not bad, and two of them he eliminated on the scaffold. We should really visit England and go to The Tower to look at the place where they were executed. This would be worth while." (E. Hanfstaengl, 1970.) Indeed, this place of execution interested him more than the rest of England.

Characteristic, also, is Hitler's reaction to a film *Fredericus Rex* in 1923. In this movie Frederick's father wants to execute both his son and his friend for an attempt to flee the country. While still in the theater and again on the way home, Hitler repeated, "He [the son] is also to be killed—magnificent. This means: off with the head of anybody who sins against the state, even if he is one's own son'" He went on to say that this method must be applied in the case of the French (who at the time had occupied the valuable Ruhr area) and concluded: "What does it matter if a dozen of our

cities on the Rhine and Ruhr are consumed by fire and if a few hundred thousand people lose their lives!" (E. Hanfstaengl, 1970.)

Characteristic of his necrophilous orientation are certain often repeated *jokes*. While Hitler kept to a vegetarian diet, his guests were served a regular dinner. "If there was a meat broth," reports Speer, "I could depend on his speaking of 'corpse tea'; in connection with crayfish he brought out his story of a deceased grandmother whose relations had thrown her body into the brook to lure the crustaceans; for eels, that they were best fattened and caught by using dead cats." (A. Speer, 1970.)

Hitler's *face* also betrayed the sniffing expression mentioned in the discussion of necrophilia, as if he were constantly smelling a bad odor; this is quite apparent from a large number of photographs. His laugh was never free, but was a kind of smirk, as one can also recognize from photographs. This trait is particularly noticeable at the peak of his career, after the surrender of France in the railroad car in Compiègne. As depicted in a newsreel at the time, after he left the car he performed a little "dance," struck his thighs and belly with his hands, and made an ugly smirk, as if he had just swallowed France.[15]

Another of Hitler's necrophilous traits was *boredom*. His conversations at table are the most drastic manifestation of this form of lifelessness. At Obersalzberg after the afternoon dinner he and his company would walk to the teahouse where tea and coffee with cakes and other sweets were served. "Here, at the coffee table, Hitler was particularly fond of drifting into endless monologues. The subjects were mostly familiar to the company, who therefore listened absently, though pretending attention. Occasionally Hitler himself fell asleep over one of his monologues. The company then continued chatting in whispers, hoping that he would awaken in time for the evening meal." (A. Speer. 1970.) Afterward they all returned to the house and two hours later supper was served. After supper two movies were shown, and were occasionally followed by some trivial talk about them.

> From one o'clock on, some members of the company, in spite of all their efforts to control themselves, could no longer repress their yawns. But the social occasion dragged on in monotonous, wearing emptiness for another hour or more, until at last Eva Braun had a few words with Hitler and was permitted to go upstairs.[16] Hitler would stand up about a quarter of an hour later, to bid his company goodnight. Those who

> remained, liberated, often followed those numbing hours with a gay party over champagne and cognac. (A. Speer, 1970.)[17]

Hitler's destructiveness can be recognized through its main manifestations, some of which I have mentioned, but it was not recognized by millions of Germans or by statesmen and politicians all over the world. On the contrary, he was considered a great patriot, motivated by love for his country; the savior who would liberate Germany from the Versailles treaty and from acute economic disaster; the great constructor who would build a new, prosperous Germany. How could the Germans and the world not have seen the great destroyer behind the mask of the builder?

There are many reasons. Hitler was a consummate liar and actor. He proclaimed his desire for peace and insisted after every new success that this was the last demand he would make; he conveyed this convincingly both by his words and his highly controlled voice. But it was only his future enemies that he deceived. For example, in one of his talks to his generals, he proclaimed: "Man has a sense for the discovery of beauty. How rich is the world for one who makes use of this sense… Beauty must have power over men… [After the end of the war] I want to devote myself to my thoughts for five to ten years, and to writing them down. Wars come and go. What remains are only the values of culture…" He wants to create a new era of tolerance and accuses the Jews of having introduced intolerance, through Christianity. (H. Picker, 1965.)

Repression of Destructiveness

Hitler was probably not even consciously lying when he spoke thus; he was simply assuming the old role of "artist" and "writer," never having admitted his failure in both those fields. Utterances of this kind, however, had a much more important function, one that is related to the core of Hitler's character structure: the repression of the awareness of his destructiveness. First in *rationalizations:* any destruction he ordered he rationalized as being only for the sake of the survival, growth, splendor of the German nation: it was in defense against enemies who wanted to destroy Germany (Jews, Russians, eventually England and America); he was acting in the name of the biological law of survival ("If I am to believe in a divine command, it can only be the one to preserve the species." [H.

Picker, 1965.]) In other words, when Hitler gave his orders for destruction he was only aware of his “duty” and of his noble intentions; these required destructive acts, but he repressed the *awareness* of his *craving* for destruction. Thus he avoided confronting himself with his true motivations.

A still more efficient form of repression are *reaction formations*. This is a clinically well-established form of dealing with repressed strivings; a person denies their existence by developing traits that are exactly the opposite. One example of these reaction formations was his vegetarianism. Not that all vegetarianism has this function, but that it did in Hitler’s case is indicated by the fact that he stopped eating meat after the suicide of his half-niece Geli Raubal, who had been his mistress. His whole behavior at this time shows that he felt an intense guilt for her suicide. Even if we discard as unproven the suspicion found in the literature that he actually killed her in a fit of rage over her infatuation with a Jewish artist, he could be blamed for her suicide. He held her like a prisoner, was extremely jealous, and had started a lively flirtation with Eva Braun. After Geli’s death he fell into a state of depression, started a kind of mourning cult (her room remained undisturbed as long as he lived in Munich, and he visited it every Christmas). His abstinence from meat was an atonement for his guilt and the proof of his incapacity to kill. His antipathy for hunting probably had the same function.

The most distinct manifestations of this reaction formation can be seen in the following facts cited by W. Maser (1971). Hitler did not get involved in any of the fighting with political opponents in the years before his seizure of power. Only once did he touch a political opponent. He was never present at a murder or an execution. (When Röhm asked before he was killed that the Führer himself should come and shoot him, he knew what he was talking about.) When some of his comrades were killed in the attempted coup in Munich (November 9, 1923), he fought with ideas of suicide and began to suffer twitching of his left arm, a condition which returned after the defeat in Stalingrad. It was impossible for his generals to persuade him to visit the front. “Not a few military and other persons were firmly convinced that he evaded such visits because be could not tolerate the view of dead and wounded soldiers.” (W. Maser, 1971.)[18] The reason for this behavior was not lack of physical courage, amply demonstrated in the First World War, or his tender feelings for the German soldiers, for whom he felt as little as for anybody else. (W. Maser, 1971.)[19] In my

opinion this phobic reaction to seeing corpses is a defense reaction against the awareness of his own destructiveness. As long as he only gave and signed orders, he had only spoken and written. In other words, "he" has not shed blood as long as he avoided *seeing* the corpses in reality and protected himself from the affective awareness of his passion for destruction. This phobic defense reaction is basically the same mechanism as that at the bottom of Hitler's somewhat compulsive overcleanliness, mentioned by Speer.[20] This symptom in the mild form it had in Hitler, as well as in the severe form of a full-grown washing compulsion, usually has one function: that of washing off the dirt, the blood which symbolically adheres to one's hands (or the whole body); the awareness of the blood and dirt is repressed; what is conscious is only the need to be "clean." The refusal to see corpses is similar to this compulsion; both serve the denial of destructiveness.

Toward the end of his life, when he sensed the approach of his final defeat, Hitler was no longer able to continue repressing his destructiveness. A drastic example is his reaction to the sight of the dead bodies of the leaders of the aborted revolt of the generals in 1944. The man who had not been able to see corpses now gave orders to be shown the film taken of the torture and execution of the generals and of the corpses in their prison garb hanging from meat hooks. He put a photograph of this scene on his desk.[21] His previous threat to destroy Germany in case of defeat was now to be translated into reality; it was not due to Hitler that Germany was spared.

Other Aspects of Hitler's Personality

We cannot understand Hitler or anyone else by seeing only one of his passions, even if it is the most fundamental of them. To comprehend how this man, driven by destructiveness, succeeded in becoming the most powerful man in Europe, admired by many Germans (and not a few other people), we must try to grasp his *whole* character structure, his special talents and gifts, and the social situation within which he functioned.

In addition to necrophilia Hitler also presents the picture of sadism, although this is overshadowed by the intensity of his lust for plain destruction. Since I analyzed Hitler's sadomasochistic, authoritarian character in an earlier work (E. Fromm, 1941a), I can be very brief here. Both in his writing and his speeches, Hitler expressed the craving for power

over weaker people. He explained the advantage of having mass meetings in the evening thus:

> It seems that in the morning and even during the day men's will power revolts with highest energy against an attempt at being forced under another's will and another's opinion. In the evening, however, they succumb more easily to the dominating force of a stronger will. For truly every such meeting presents a wrestling match between two opposed forces. The superior oratorical talent of a domineering apostolic nature will now succeed more easily in winning for the new will people who themselves have in turn experienced a weakening of their force of resistance in the most natural way, than people who still have full command of the energy of their minds and their will power. (A. Hitler, 1943.)

At the same time his submissive attitude made him feel that he was acting in the name of a higher power, "Providence," or biological law. In one sentence Hitler gave expression both to his sadistic and his necrophilous aspects: "What they [the masses] want is the victory of the stronger and the annihilation or the unconditional surrender of the weaker." (A. Hitler, 1943.) The sadist would demand *surrender;* only the necrophile demands *annihilation.* The word "or" connects the sadistic and the necrophilous sides of Hitler's character; but we know from the record that the wish for annihilation was stronger in him than that for mere surrender.

Three other character traits closely related to each other were his narcissism, his withdrawn attitude, and his lack of any feeling of love, warmth, or compassion.

His *narcissism*[22] is the most easily recognizable trait in the picture. He shows all the typical symptoms of an extremely narcissistic person: he is interested only in himself, *his* desires, *his* thought, *his* wishes; he talked endlessly about his ideas, his past, his plans; the world is real only as far as it is the object of his schemes and desires; other people matter only as far as they serve him or can be used; he always knows everything better than anyone else. This certainty in one's own ideas and schemes is a typical characteristic of intense narcissism.

Hitler came to his conclusions mainly on an emotional basis, not as a result of examining *knowledge.* For him, political, economic, and social

facts were replaced by *ideology.* Once he believed in an ideology because it appealed to his emotions, he believed the facts that the ideology proclaimed as true. This does not mean he neglected facts entirely; to some extent he was a shrewd observer and evaluated certain facts better than many less narcissistic people. But this capacity, which I shall discuss further on, does not exclude his lack of realism in essential matters concerning which his beliefs and decisions are made largely on a narcissistic basis.

Hanfstaengl reports a telling illustration of Hitler's narcissism: Goebbels had ordered a tape recording made of some of Hitler's speeches. Whenever Hitler visited him, Goebbels would play these recordings; Hitler would "throw himself in a big overstuffed chair and enjoy his voice in a trancelike state *(in einer Art von Vollnarkose)* like the Greek youth who was tragically in love with himself and found his death in the water while admiring his own image on its smooth surface." (E. Hanfstaengl, 1970.) P. E. Schramm speaks of Hitler's "cult of the ego. He was dominated, according to [General] Alfred Jodl by an 'almost mystical conviction of his infallibility as leader of the nation and of the war.'" (H. Picker, 1965.) Speer writes about Hitler's "megalomania" as shown in his building plans. His own palace in Berlin was to be the biggest residence ever built, one hundred fifty times the size of the chancellor's residence at the time of Bismarck. (A. Speer, 1970.)

Related to his narcissism is Hitler's utter *lack of interest in anybody or anything*, except what was of service to him, and his cold remoteness from everybody. To his absolute narcissism corresponded an almost absolute lack of love, tenderness, or empathy for anybody. In his whole history one can not find a single person who could be called his friend; Kubizek and Speer come closer to this description than anyone else, yet they could by no means be called "friends." Kubizek, being of the same age, served him as audience, admirer, and companion; but Hitler was never frank with him. The relationship with Speer was different; Speer probably represented for Hitler the image of himself as an architect; *he*, Hitler, would be a great builder through the medium of Speer. He seems even to have had some genuine affection for Speer—the only instance where we find this, perhaps with the exception of Kubizek—and I surmise that one reason for this rare phenomenon may have been that architecture was the only field in which Hitler had a real interest in something outside of himself, the only area in which he was alive. Nevertheless, Speer was not his friend; as Speer put it

succinctly at the Nuremberg trial: “If Hitler had had any friends, I would have been his friend.” The fact was that Hitler had no friends; he was always a secretive loner, whether as a painter of postcards in Vienna or as the Führer of the Reich. Speer remarks on his “inability to make human contacts.” Hitler himself was aware of his complete loneliness. Speer reports Hitler’s telling him that after his (Hitler’s) eventual retirement he would be soon forgotten:

> People would turn to his successor quickly enough once it became evident that power was now in those hands… Everyone would forsake him. Playing with this idea, with a good measure of self-pity, he continued: “Perhaps one of my former associates will visit me occasionally. But I don’t count on it. Aside from Fräulein Braun, I’ll take no one with me. Fräulein Braun and my dog. I’ll be lonely. For why should anyone voluntarily stay with me for any length of time? Nobody will take notice of me any more. They’ll all go running after my successor. Perhaps once a year they’ll show up for my birthday. (A. Speer, 1970.)

In these sentiments Hitler not only expresses the notion that nobody has any affection for him, but also the conviction that the only reason for attachment to him is his power; his friends were his dog and the woman whom he neither loved nor respected, but completely controlled.

Hitler was cold and pitiless. This was noticed by such sensitive people as H. Rauschning (1940) and Speer. The latter gives a telling example; he as well as Goebbels tried to persuade Hitler, for propaganda purposes, to visit the bombed cities. “But Hitler regularly brushed away any such suggestion. During his drives from Stettin Station to the Chancellery, or to his apartment in Prinzregentenstrasse in Munich, he now ordered his chauffeur to take the shortest route, whereas he formerly loved long detours. Since I accompanied him several times on such drives, I saw with what absence of emotion he noted the new areas of rubble through which his car would pass.” (A. Speer, 1970.) The only living creature “who aroused any flicker of human feeling in Hitler” was his dog. (A Speer. 1970.)

Many other, less sensitive people were deceived; what they believed to be *warmth* was in fact *excitation*, which emerged when Hitler spoke about his favorite topics or was in a vengeful and destructive mood. In the whole

literature about Hitler I was unable to find any instance in which he showed compassion for anybody; of course, not for his enemies, but neither for the fighting soldiers and eventually for the German civilians. Never were his tactical decisions in the war—mainly his insistence on not retreating (for instance in the battle for Stalingrad) influenced by concern about the number of soldiers who would be sacrificed; they were only so many "guns."

Summarizing, Speer states: "Hitler lacked all the more gentle virtues of man: tenderness, love, poetry, were alien to his nature. On the surface he showed courtesy, charm, tranquility, correctness, amiability, self-control. This outer skin obviously had the function to cover up the really dominant traits with a complete although thin layer." (Afterword by A. Speer, in J. Brosse, 1972.)

Relations to Women

Hitler's relations to women show the same lack of love and tenderness or compassion as do his relations to men. This statement would seem to contradict that Hitler was very attached to his mother; but if we assume that Hitler's incestuousness was of the malignant type, i.e., that he was tied to mother, but that this tie was cold and impersonal, we will be prepared to find that his relations to women in his later life were also cold and impersonal.

Among the women in whom Hitler was interested we can distinguish essentially two categories, characterized mainly by their respective social positions: (1) the "respectable" women, distinguished by their wealth, social status, or by being successful actresses, and (2) the women who were socially "beneath" him, like his half-niece, Geli Raubal, and his mistress of many years, Eva Braun. His behavior and feelings toward the first group were quite different from those toward the second group.

Among the women in the first group were a number of elderly and wealthy society ladies in Munich who befriended him and made considerable gifts to him personally and to the party. More importantly, they introduced him to upper-class life and manners, He accepted their gifts and adoration graciously, but never fell in love with or was erotically attracted to these mother figures.

With other socially superior women he was always somewhat shy and timid. His youthful infatuation with Stephanie, a young and pretty upper-class girl in Linz, is a prototype for this attitude; he was smitten by her, and if we follow Kubizek's report, he would walk by her house and try to see her on walks, yet he never dared to address her or make any attempt, through a third person, to be introduced. Eventually he wrote her a letter expressing his wish to marry her later on, after he had become somebody, but did not sign it. This whole behavior, bearing the stamp of a lack of realism may be attributed to his youth, but according to many other reports, such as those by Hanfstaengl and Speer, he showed the same timidity toward women in later years. It seems that his attitude toward desirable women whom he admired remained one of distant admiration. In Munich he liked to look at good-looking women; when he came to power he liked to surround himself with beautiful women, especially film actresses, but there is no evidence that he ever fell in love with any of them. Toward these women "Hitler behaved rather like the graduate of the dancing class at the final dance. He displayed a shy eagerness to do nothing wrong, to offer a sufficient number of compliments, and to welcome them and bid them goodbye with the Austrian kissing of the hand." (A. Speer, 1970.)

There were also the women he did not admire or respect, such as Geli Raubal and Eva Braun, but who submitted to him. It was with this type of woman that he seems mainly to have had sexual relations.

Hitler's sexual life has been the subject of much speculation. It has often been claimed that he was a homosexual, but there is no evidence of it, nor does it seem likely to have been the case.[23] On the other hand, there is no evidence that his sexual relations were normal, or even that he was sexually potent. Most of the data in regard to Hitler's sexual life come from Hanfstaengl, who had plenty of occasions to observe him in Munich and Berlin in the twenties and early thirties.[24]

Hanfstaengl reports a statement made by Geli Raubal to a friend: "My uncle is a monster. Nobody can imagine what he demands from me!" This statement is somewhat corroborated by another story reported by Hanfstaengl, told him by F. Schwartz, the treasurer of the Party in the twenties. According to the latter, Hitler was blackmailed by a man who had gotten possession of pornographic sketches Hitler had made of Geli, showing her in positions "which any professional model would decline to assume." Hitler gave orders to pay off the man, but he did not permit the

sketches to be destroyed; they had to be preserved in his safe in the Brown House. Nobody knows what these sketches portrayed, but it is safe to assume that they were not just sketches of Geli in the nude, since in the Munich of the twenties that could hardly have been compromising enough to blackmail Hitler. It is probable that the sketches portrayed some perverse pose or position, and that Hitler's sexual desires were somewhat abnormal; whether he was totally incapable of performing the normal sexual act, as Hanfstaengl claims, is beyond our knowing. But it is likely that the sexual interests of a cold, timid, sadistic, and destructive man like Hitler were mainly of a perverse nature. Since we have no data, it is not very helpful to try to construct a detailed picture of his sexual tastes. The most one can guess, I believe, is that his sexual desires were largely voyeuristic, anal-sadistic with the inferior type of women, and masochistic with admired women.

We have no evidence concerning his sexual relations with Eva Braun, either, but we do know a great deal more about his affective relationship to her. It is clear that he treated her with complete lack of consideration. His birthday gifts to her are only one example; he would tell an adjutant to buy her some cheap costume jewelry and the obligatory flowers.[25] "In general Hitler showed little consideration for her feelings. In her presence he would enlarge on his attitude towards women as though she were not present: 'a highly intelligent man should take a primitive and stupid woman.'" (A. Speer, 1970.)

We get a further insight into Hitler's attitude toward Eva Braun from the latter's diary. Her writing is difficult to decipher in part, but probably reads as follows:

> 11th March, 1935. I wish only for one thing—to be severely ill and not to know anything about him for at least a week. Why does nothing happen to me? Why must I go through all this? If I had only never met him. I am desperate. Now I am again buying sleeping powders, then I get into a dreamlike state and do not think about it so much any more.
>
> Why doesn't the devil get me? I am sure it would be more pleasant with him than here.
>
> For 3 hours I waited in front of the Carlton and had to watch while he brought flowers…, and took her to dinner. [Remark added later, on March 16:] crazy imagination.

He uses me only for certain purposes, it is not possible otherwise. [Added later:] nonsense!

When he says he is fond of me [*er hat mich lieb]* he means it only at a moment, exactly like his promises which he never keeps.

April 1, 1935. Last night we were invited by him to the *Vier Jahreszeiten* [a Munich restaurant]. I had to sit beside him for 3 hours and could not say a single word to him. On parting he gave me, as once before, an envelope with money. How lovely it would have been if he had written me a greeting or a kind word with it: it would have given me so much pleasure. But he does not think of such things.

May 28, 1935. I have just sent him a letter that for me is decisive, whether he … [indecipherable].

Well, we shall see. If I do not have an answer by tonight at 10:00, I will simply take my 25 pills and shall softly … sleep.

Is that his … love as he has assured me so often, if he has no kind word for me in 3 months? …

Good Lord, I am afraid that he will not answer me today. If only somebody would help me, everything is so terrible and hopeless. Perhaps my letter reached him at an inappropriate moment. Perhaps I should not have written him at all? Whatever it may be, the uncertainty is more terrible to bear than a sudden end.

I have decided on 35 pieces [sleeping pills]: this time it is really to be a "dead sure" matter. If he would at least have somebody phone me. (Eva Braun, 1935.—My translation.)

In the same diary she complains that on the occasion of her birthday he did not give her any of the things she had wanted so much (a small dog and clothes), but only had someone bring her flowers: she bought herself some jewelry for about twelve dollars, hoping that at least he would like to see it on her.

There are some data on Hitler's masochistic behavior toward women whom he admired. Hanfstaengl reports about such an incident in connection with Hitler's attitude toward his (Hanfstaengl's) wife. At a visit to Hanfstaengl's home, while the latter had left for a few minutes, Hitler fell on his knees before Mrs. Hanfstaengl, called himself her slave, and deplored the fate that had given him, too late, the bittersweet experience of

meeting her. The essential point of this report, Hitler's masochistic behavior, is corroborated by a document W. C. Langer (1972) was able to dig out. Renée Muller, a film actress, confided to her director, A. Zeissler, what happened during the evening she spent at the Chancellery:

> She had been sure that he was going to have intercourse with her; that they had both undressed and were apparently getting ready for bed when Hitler fell on the floor and begged her to kick him. She demurred, but he pleaded with her and condemned himself as unworthy, heaped all kinds of accusations on his own head, and just groveled in an agonizing manner. The scene became intolerable to her, and she finally acceded to his wishes and kicked him. This excited him greatly, and he begged for more and more, always saying that it was even better than he deserved and that he was not worthy to be in the same room with her. As she continued to kick him he became more and more excited. (A. Zeissler, 1943.)

Renée Muller committed suicide shortly afterward.

There were a number of other women of the upper class who are said to have been in love with Hitler; but there is not enough evidence to prove that he had sexual relations with them. It is remarkable that quite a few women who had been close to Hitler committed—or tried to commit—suicide: Geli Raubal, Eva Braun (twice), Renée Muller, Unity Mitford, and a few, more doubtful cases quoted by Maser. One can hardly help speculating that Hitler's destructiveness was not without effect on them.

Whatever the nature of Hitler's perversion, the details hardly matter, nor does his sexual life explain anything more about him than what we know already. In fact, the credibility of the scarce data we have on his sexual life rests mainly on our knowledge of his character.

Gifts and Talents

The characterological analysis of Hitler has shown us a withdrawn, extremely narcissistic, unrelated, undisciplined, sadomasochistic, and necrophilous person. Surely these qualities would not explain his success, unless he was a man of considerable gifts and talents.

What were they?

The greatest of Hitler's talents was his capacity to influence, impress, and persuade people. We have seen that he had this ability even as a child. He recognized and practiced it in his role as leader of the boys' gangs in the war games; later in his relation to Kubizek, his first real follower; then with the inmates of the Männerheim in Vienna. Shortly after the revolution, in 1919, he was sent out by his military superiors with the mission to convert the soldiers to right-wing ideas and to arouse their hate against the revolutionaries. He met with the small and insignificant group of the Socialist Workers' Party (fifty members) and succeeded within a year in becoming the Party's undisputed leader, renaming it the National Socialist German Worker's Party, changing its constitution, and being accepted as one of the most popular speakers in Munich.

The reasons for this capacity to influence people—which is, of course, the essential talent of all demagogues—are manifold.

One must first think of what has often been called his *magnetism,* which, according to most observers, originated in his eyes. (H. Picker, 1965; W. Maser, 1971; A. Speer, 1970.) There are a number of reports showing that even people who are biased against him suddenly become converted when he looked straight at them. Professor A. von Müller, who gave a course on history to the soldiers training for intelligence work in Munich, gives the following picture of his first meeting with Hitler:

> At the end of my lecture I noticed a small group that made me stop. They stood as if mesmerized by a man in their midst who spoke to them in a strange guttural voice without stopping, and with increasing excitation: I had the peculiar feeling that their own excitation was caused by his, and simultaneously that theirs gave his voice its energy. I saw a pallid, thin face … with a short clipped moustache and conspicuously large, pale blue, fanatically cold, shining eyes. (W. Maser, 1971.)

There are many reports mentioning the magnetic qualities of Hitler's eyes. Since I never saw him except in pictures, which give only a most inadequate impression of this peculiar quality, I can only speculate on what it was. Such speculation is facilitated, however, by a frequently made observation that extremely narcissistic people—especially fanatics—often show a particular glitter in their eyes that gives them an appearance of great

intensity, otherworldliness, and devotion. In fact, it is sometimes not easy to distinguish between the expression in the eyes of an extremely devoted, almost saintly man and those of a highly narcissistic, sometimes even half-crazy man. The only distinguishing quality is the presence—or absence—of warmth, and all reports agree that Hitler had cold eyes, that his whole facial expression was cold, that there was an absence of any warmth or compassion. While this trait could have a negative effect—as in fact it did on many—it often enhances magnetic power. Cold ruthlessness and the lack of humanity in a face produces fear; one prefers to admire rather than be afraid. The word "awe" best characterizes this blend of feelings; awe means something terrible (as in "awful") as well as something admirable (as in to be in awe of somebody).[26]

Another factor in Hitler's impressiveness was his narcissism and the unshakable *certainty* that, like so many narcissists, he felt about his ideas. In order to understand this phenomenon we must consider that, as far as our knowledge is concerned, nothing is certain except death. But to say that nothing is certain does not imply that everything is a matter of guesswork. From an educated guess, to a hypothesis, to a theory, an ever increasing approximation of certainty exists mediated by reason, realistic observation, critical thought, and imagination. For the one who has these capacities, relative uncertainty is very acceptable because it is the result of the active use of his faculties, while certainty is boring because it is dead. But for those without these faculties, especially at a time of as much social and political uncertainty as there was in Germany in the twenties, the fanatic who pretends to be certain becomes a most attractive figure, somebody akin to a savior.

A related factor that facilitated Hitler's influence was his gift for oversimplification. His speeches were not restrained by intellectual or moral scruples. He picked out the facts that served his thesis, connected the pieces, and made up a plausible argument, plausible at least for uncritical minds. He was also a consummate actor, showing a remarkable capacity for mimicking the speech and gestures of the most diverse people.[27] He had complete control over his voice, consciously playing on it in order to achieve the desired effect. When he spoke to students, he could be calm and reasonable. He also knew the right tone for speaking to his tough and uneducated old Munich cronies, or to a German prince, or to his generals. He could make an angry scene when he wanted to break down the

Czechoslovakian or Polish ministers in order to make them surrender, and he could be the perfect and amiable host to Neville Chamberlain.

One cannot speak about Hitler's talent for impressing others without mentioning his *attacks of anger.* Those occasional outbursts have largely contributed to the cliché about Hitler, especially widespread outside of Germany, presenting him as someone constantly angry, shouting, incapable of self-control. Such a picture is by no means correct. Hitler was generally courteous, polite, and controlled; his spells of anger even though they were not rare, were the exception, but they could be of the greatest intensity. These angry outbursts occurred on two kinds of occasions. First, in his speeches, especially toward the conclusion. This anger was quite authentic because it was fed by his very genuine passion of hate and destruction, to which he gave full and uninhibited expression at a certain point in his speeches. It was the very authenticity of his hate that made it so impressive and infectious. Genuine as these oratorical expressions of hate were, they were not, however, uncontrolled. Hitler knew very well when the time had arrived to let go and to whip up the audience's emotions, and only then did he open the floodgates of his hate.

His angry outbursts in conversations seem to have been of another nature, not unlike those he had had as a child, when he felt frustrated.[28] Speer has compared them with the tantrums of a six-year-old, which was in many aspects Hitler's "emotional age." He used these outbursts to intimidate people, but he could also control them when he felt it was expedient to do so.

A good illustration is provided by a scene described by one of the most outstanding German military leaders, General Heinz Guderian:

> "With an angry red face, raised fists, the trembling man [Hitler] stood before me, beside himself with rage and having lost all composure *(fassungslos)*… He shouted more and more loudly, his face was distorted." When Guderian was not impressed by this spectacle and insisted on his original opinion that had so infuriated him, Hitler suddenly changed, smiled very amiably and told Guderian: "Please go on with your report; today the General Staff has won a battle." (A. Bullock, 1965.)

Speer's appraisal of Hitler's outbursts is corroborated by many other reports in the literature:

> After dramatic negotiations Hitler was apt to deride his opposites. Once he described Schuschnigg's visit to Obersalzberg on February 12, 1939. By a pretended fit of passion he had made the Austrian Chancellor realize the gravity of the situation, be said, and finally forced him to yield. Many of those hysterical scenes that have been reported were probably carefully staged. In general, self-control was one of Hitler's most striking characteristics. In those early days he lost control of himself only a very few times, at least in my presence. (A. Speer, 1970.)

Another of Hitler's remarkable gifts was his extraordinary *memory*. P. E. Schramm gives a vivid description:

> One capacity that astounded everybody again and again—including those who were not under his spell, was his stupendous memory; a memory that could exactly retain even unimportant details, like the characters in Karl May's novels, the authors of books he had once read, even the make of the bicycle he had ridden in 1915. He remembered exactly the dates in his political career, the inns he had been to, the streets he had driven on. (H. Picker, 1965.)

A number of reports show Hitler's faculty for remembering figures and technical details—the exact caliber and range of any type of gun, the number of submarines at sea and at home ports, and many other details of military importance. No wonder that his generals were often deeply impressed by the thoroughness of his knowledge, which in fact was mainly a feat of memory.

This brings us to a very important question, that of Hitler's *erudition* and *knowledge*, a question that is of special importance today when there is an increasing tendency to restore the image of Hitler, and an undiluted admiration of Hitler's greatness is expressed in a number of recent books by former Nazis.[29]

Maser takes a somewhat contradictory position. He cautions the reader that many statements made by Hitler about his own erudition are of doubtful value in the absence of objective evidence. (For instance, Hitler

claimed that he read one serious book every night, and that since he was twenty-two he had seriously studied world history; the history of art, of culture, of architecture, and political science.) In spite of this initial warning Maser asserts, without citing sources, that according to "well-authenticated" reports of witnesses, Hitler had begun in his later school years to study advanced works in science and art, but was most at home in those branches of history that he himself claimed to have mastered. How uncritical such an evaluation of Hitler's knowledge is can be seen from one drastic example: Maser writes that Hitler's remarks in the *Zwiegespräche* confirm only "what Hitler had convincingly proved before, both publicly and in private conversations: his remarkable knowledge of the Bible and of the Talmud." (W. Maser, 1971.) The Talmud is a large and difficult work and only someone who has devoted years to its study could have a "remarkable knowledge" of it. The facts are simple: the anti-Semitic literature with which Hitler was quite familiar, cites a number of sentences from the Talmud, sometimes distorted or taken out of context, in order to prove the sinister nature of the Jews. Hitler remembered these phrases and bluffed his listeners into believing that he had mastered a whole literature. That he should thus bluff his listeners is understandable; that he could still bluff a historian thirty years later is regrettable.

Hitler could, indeed, talk glibly and with a claim to knowledge about almost everything under the sun, as anyone who reads the *Table Talks* (H. Picker, 1965) can easily convince himself. He held forth on paleontology, anthropology, and every aspect of history, philosophy, religion, psychology of women, and biology.

What does a critical examination of Hitler's erudition and knowledge show?

In school he was never capable of making an effort to do serious reading, even in subjects like history that had captured his interest. In his Viennese years he spent most of his time walking the streets, looking at buildings, sketching, and talking. The capacity for sustained study and serious, painstaking reading could have emerged after the war, but there is no evidence for it except Hitler's own claims. (He is supposed to have carried a volume of Schopenhauer with him during the war. How much he read of it we do not know.) On the other hand, an examination of the *Table Talks, of* his speeches, and of *Mein Kampf* suggests that he must indeed have been a greedy, voracious reader with a tremendous capacity for

gleaning and retaining facts, and then using them whenever possible to underscore his biases.

Read with some objectivity, *Mein Kampf* emerges as hardly the work of a man with any solid knowledge, but as a cleverly—and dishonestly—constructed propaganda pamphlet. As for his speeches, while tremendously effective, they were those of a rabble-rousing demagogue, not of an educated (self or otherwise) man. The *Table Talks* show him at his highest conversational level. But they also reveal him as a very gifted, half-educated man with no sound foundation in anything, who rambled from one field of knowledge to another, yet, helped by his prodigious memory, managed to combine into a more or less coherent whole all the bits of information he had picked up in the kind of informational reading he did do. Sometimes he made severe blunders that showed his lack of basic knowledge, but by and large he seems to have impressed his listeners, although most likely not all of them.

(In trying to determine the effect of the *Table Talks* on Hitler's guests, one should remember that while the men who listened to him were well-educated and intelligent, some of them were fascinated by him and were therefore prone to overlook the lack of foundation in his ramblings. They may also have been impressed by the extremely wide range of subjects on which Hitler talked with such self-assurance; brought up in the tradition of intellectual honesty, it would have been difficult for them to believe that here sat a man who was largely bluffing.)

The evidence indicates that, with rare exceptions, Hitler read nothing that challenged biased fanatical premises or that required critical and objective thought. In accordance with his character his motive for reading was not knowledge but ammunition for his passion for persuading others—and himself. He wanted to be excited by everything he read; he looked for an immediate emotional satisfaction through confirmation of his biases. Just as he was not interested in music by Bach or Mozart, but only in Wagner's operas, he was not interested in books that required participation and patience and had the beauty of truth. He devoured printed pages, but in a completely receptive and greedy way. Few serious books in any field can be read in this way; the proper material for this kind of reading are political pamphlets and pseudoscientific books, such as those on race by Gobineau or Chamberlain as well as popularized books on Darwinism, and others not too difficult to understand from which Hitler could pick out what suited

him. He may also have read books on subjects that genuinely interested him, such as architecture and military history, but we do not know to what extent. By and large, it can be assumed that Hitler read popular literature (including pamphlets), in which he found many quotations from more serious sources; these he retained and quoted in his turn as if he had read the originals. The real problem is not how many books Hitler read, but whether he had acquired the basic quality of an educated man—i.e., the capacity for objectivity and reason in the assimilation of knowledge. It has often been said that Hitler was an autodidact, but this term is misleading: Hitler was not a *self-taught* man but a *half-taught* man, and the half that was missing was the knowledge of what knowledge is.

Hitler's basic lack of education manifests itself in still another way. He had, of course, the possibility of inviting German scholars in any field in order to learn from them and increase his knowledge. But according to the reports by Schramm as well as by Speer, he almost totally avoided doing this.[30] He felt uneasy with people who were his equals—or his superiors—in any respect, as is frequently the case with narcissistic and authoritarian characters. He had to be in a position where he could play the role of the infallible one; if this was not possible, such a discussion threatened the whole edifice of his inflated knowledge, just as a serious book would have done.

The only exception to Hitler's avoidance of specialists is found in his relation to architects, in particular, to Professor P. L. Troost. Troost was not subservient to Hitler; for instance, when Hitler came to Troost's apartment, Troost never went to meet him at the stairs, nor did he ever accompany Hitler downstairs when he left. Nevertheless, Hitler's admiration for Troost was unmitigated. He was never arrogant or argumentative, but behaved toward Troost like a student. (A. Speer, 1970.) Even in a photograph published in Speer's book one can recognize Hitler's almost timid attitude toward the professor. I suggest that Hitler behaved as he did toward Troost because of his interest in architecture, which I have already stressed.

Hitler's taste in music and painting, like that in history and philosophy, was determined almost exclusively by his passions. Each evening after supper in Obersalzberg he saw two films; his favorites were operettas and musicals; no travelogues, films on nature, or educational films. (A. Speer, 1970.) I have already mentioned that such films as *Fredericus Rex* delighted him. In music he was interested almost exclusively in operettas and

Wagnerian music, whose emotionalism was a kind of tonic to him. Hanfstaengl often played a few minutes of Wagner for him, especially when he felt low or depressed, and Hitler would respond as to an energizing drug.

There is no evidence that the one-time painter had any serious interest in painting. He preferred to look at the outside of a museum, its architecture, rather than to go inside and look at the paintings. Hanfstaengl gives a vivid description of a visit to the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin in the early twenties. The first painting before which Hitler stopped was Rembrandt's *Man with the Golden Helmet.* "Is this not unique?" he said to the young son of a Party member whom he had taken on this visit. "His heroic soldierly expression. A fight through and through. Here one can see that Rembrandt was, after all, Aryan and Germanic, even though he occasionally took his models from the Jewish quarter in Amsterdam."

Hitler, the "painter," mostly copied postcards and old etchings; the subjects were largely the facades of buildings ("architectural drawing"), but also landscapes and portraits and illustrations for advertisements. The principle that guided him was exclusively that of easy salability, and he would, as we have seen, repeat certain sketches and watercolors when they found a demand. His drawings and paintings show the quality one would expect from a man who paints thus. They were pleasant, but unalive and lacking in personal expression. The best of his work seems to be his architectural sketches. But even when he did not copy, as during the war, they had a precise, patient, and pedantic style; no personal impulse can be felt in them, although they were "well executed." (A. Speer, 1970.) Even Hitler himself admitted later that his motive for painting was simply to make a living, and that he was only a "small painter" *(ein kleiner Maler).* He said to his crony Hoffmann, the photographer, in 1944, "I do not want to become a painter. I painted only to be able to live and to study." (W. Maser, 1971.) One may conclude that he was a commercial artist, a copyist with talent for drawing; he did not have the talent to become a great painter.[31]

This impression of Hitler's lack of originality is reinforced when one looks at the more than one hundred sketches Speer has in his possession. Even though I am not competent as a judge of art, I believe no psychologically sensitive person can fail to note the extremely pedantic and lifeless character of these sketches. There is, for instance, one small detail of a sketch for the interior of a theater that Hitler repeated many times, virtually without any change; there are similar repetitions of a sketch of an

obelisk. Sometimes one can see the aggression in the intense pencil strokes, while other pictures lack any personal expression. It is very interesting to find that interspersed with these sketches (done between 1925 and 1940) are artless drawings of submarines, tanks, and other military equipment.[32]

The fact that Hitler had little interest in painting should not make us assume that his interest in architecture was not genuine. This is of great importance for the understanding of Hitler's personality, because it would seem to *be* the only genuine interest in his life. By this I mean one that was not primarily narcissistic, that was not a manifestation of destructiveness, that was not faked. It is, of course, not easy to judge how authentic are the interests of a man who is so accustomed to lie about himself. Yet I believe there are sufficient data to demonstrate the genuineness of his architectural interests. The most important fact in this regard is Hitler's unending enthusiasm for discussing architectural plans, reported so vividly by Speer; one can see that here he was motivated by a real interest in something other than himself. He was not lecturing but asking questions and engaging in a real discussion. I believe that in his interest in architecture the power-driven, feeling-less, destructive man for once came to life, even though every time, the total impact of his character left Speer exhausted. I do not mean to say that Hitler was a changed man when he talked about architecture, but that it was the one situation when the "monster" was closest to being human.

These considerations do not imply that Hitler was right in his claim that external circumstances forced him to give up his plan to become an architect. We have seen that he would have had to do relatively little to achieve this aim, but did not make the effort because he was more driven by his craving for omnipotence and destruction than stimulated by his love for architecture. The assumption of the genuineness of his architectural interest does not negate the megalomanic quality of his concern or his poor taste. As Speer remarks, his preference was for the neobaroque of the eighties and nineties, and reverted to its decadent forms made popular by Kaiser Wilhelm II. That his taste was as poor in architecture as in other fields is not surprising. Taste cannot be separated from character; a brutal, primitive, unfeeling person like Hitler, blind to everything except what could be of use to him, can hardly fail to have poor taste. Yet I think it is important to note that Hitler's interest in architecture was the one constructive element in his character—perhaps the one bridge that linked him with life.

Veneer

The understanding of Hitler's personality requires the recognition that the veneer covering of substance of this restlessly driven man was that of an amiable, courteous, controlled, almost shy man. He was especially courteous to women, never failing to bring or send them flowers on the proper occasions; he offered them cookies and tea; he would not sit until his secretaries had taken a chair. Schramm, in his introduction to the *Table Talks*, gives a vivid picture of the effect Hitler had on his environment: "The circle of intimates was under the impression that the 'boss' was much concerned with the well-being of those around him, participating in their joys and woes. Thus, for instance, that he pondered before their birthdays what gift would cause special pleasure…" Dr. H. Picker, the young man who until he joined the group at Hitler's table

> had experienced Hitler only from afar as the "statesman," was strongly impressed by the humanness that Hitler radiated within his narrow circle, the benevolence he showed to the younger ones, his readiness to laugh… Yes, in his circle Hitler, the man without family or friends, was a good "comrade"—and he had learned what comradeship means in the First World War, retaining this knowledge in later life. The people around Hitler also knew how intensely he reacted to beautiful and well-dressed women. They knew his fondness for children; they observed how attached he was to his dogs and how relaxed he became when he could study the behavior of these animals. (H. Picker, 1965.)

Hitler could play this role of the friendly, amiable, kind, considerate man very well: not only because he was an excellent actor but also because he liked the role. It was valuable for him to deceive his closest circle about the depth of his own destructiveness and, most of all, to deceive himself.[33]

Who can know whether there was any genuine element of kindness or goodwill in Hitler's behavior? We should assume there was, because there are few people in whom all traces of kindness or goodwill in Hitler's behavior? We should assume have seen of his character makes us assume that most of this kindness was only a veneer. Hitler's concern for birthdays, for instance, contrasted with his behavior toward Eva Braun, whom he did not intend to impress as a gentleman. As for Hitler's laughter—apparently

Picker was not sensitive enough to notice its particular quality. Regarding Hitler's comradely attitude in the war, as recorded by Picker—Hanfstaengl quotes a report written by Hitler's superior officer stating that, although Hitler was an eager and dutiful soldier, "He has been excluded from further promotion because of his arrogant attitude toward his comrades and because of his spitlicking subservience toward his superiors." (E. Hanfstaengl, 1970.) As for his love for children—a trait sported by most politicians—Speer doubts whether it was genuine.[34] Concerning his affection for dogs—Schramm reveals the nature of this affection: he writes that Hitler had ordered the construction of an obstacle track in his headquarters, similar to those used for the training of the infantry, in which the dogs had to prove their courage as well as intelligence. Schramm was shown by the noncommissioned officer who took care of the dogs how fast they could follow the alternating commands of "up" and "down." Schramm comments: "I had the impression that I was observing a machine and not a dog, and wondered whether Hitler, in training the dogs, was not dominated by the intention to extinguish the will in this animal." (H. Picker, 1965.)

Schramm writes that Hitler had two faces: the friendly one, and the horrifying one—and that both were genuine. Often the same idea is expressed when people speak of a Jekyll-and-Hyde personality, implying that both are genuine. But this view is psychologically untenable, especially since Freud. The real division is between the unconscious core of the character structure and the role a person plays, including rationalizations, compensations, and other defenses that cover up the underlying reality. Even apart from Freud, this view is often dangerously naive. Who has not met people who not only deceive with words—which is minor—but with their whole behavior, their manner, their tone of voice, and their gestures? Many individuals are skillful enough to give a reasonably good performance of the character they pretend to be; they are so skillful in playing a role that they sometimes deceive even people who are by no means psychologically naive. Lacking any center within himself, any genuine principles, values, or convictions, Hitler could "play" the kindly gentleman and not be aware himself at the moment that it was a role.

Hitler liked this role, not only in order to deceive; his liking for it was related to his social background. I do not refer so much to the fact that his father was an illegitimate child and that his mother was uneducated, but to his family's peculiar social situation. Partly because of his job, partly for

personal reasons, his father lived with his family at various times in five different towns. Besides this, his role as an Imperial customs official separated him somewhat from the local middle class socially, although in terms of income and social position he was their equal. Thus the Hitler family was never fully integrated into the middle-class society in the various places where they lived. Besides, even though they were well off, they were culturally on the lower level of bourgeois life. The father came from a low social background, was interested only in politics and bees, and spent much of his free time at the tavern; his mother was uneducated and only interested in her family. As an ambitious, vain young man, Hitler must have felt socially insecure, and wanted to be counted among the more prosperous and affluent levels of the middle class. Even in Linz he had a yearning for elegant clothes, and on his walks he was meticulously clothed and carried a cane. Maser reports that in Munich Hitler had a dress suit (white tie) and that his suits were always neat and never frayed. Later, the uniform took care of the problem of clothes, but his manners were meant to be those of a member of a well-brought-up bourgeois. The flowers, his taste in the decoration of his house, and his general demeanor revealed the somewhat forced attempt to prove that he had "arrived." Hitler was the true *bourgeois-gentilhomme;* the *nouveau riche*, eager to show that he is a gentleman.[35] He hated the lower classes because he had to prove that he did not belong to them. Hitler was an uprooted man; not so much because he was an Austrian posing as a German, but because he was not rooted in any social class. He did not belong to the working class; neither did he belong to the bourgeoisie. He was a loner socially, not only psychologically. The only roots he could experience were the must archaic—those of race and blood.

Hitler's admiration for the upper classes was by no means a rare phenomenon; we find the same attitude—usually deeply repressed—among such socialist leaders of the same period as Ramsay MacDonald, for example. Such men came from the lower middle class, and their deep craving was to be "received" by the upper class, the industrialists, and the generals. Hitler was less humble; he wanted to force those who wielded real power to share it with him, and in a more formal sense even, that they should obey him. Hitler, the rebel, the leader of a *workers'* party was enamored with the rich and their style of life, in spite of his many utterances against them before he came to power. Hitler, the kind considerate man, was a role; his wish to "belong" and to be a "gentleman" was real. Hitler was in

a way a grotesque figure: a man driven by the passion to destroy, a man without compassion, a volcano of archaic passions-trying to appear a well-bred, considerate, even harmless gentleman. No wonder that he could deceive many who for any number of reasons did not mind being deceived.

A grotesque symbol of the blend between the correct bourgeois and the murderer is his marriage to Eva Braun in the bunker, shortly before their deaths. Formal marriage was the highest distinction Hitler, the petit bourgeois, could confer upon his mistress and the highest achievement for her, whose values were entirely the traditional, bourgeois norms. Everything was very correct; the proper civil servant authorized to perform a marriage ceremony had to be found; this took many hours, because it was difficult to locate a justice of the peace in that small part of Berlin not yet occupied by the Soviet troops. But the Supreme Leader did not feel he could change the rules of this bureaucratic procedure by appointing somebody among those present a justice of the peace. It was necessary to wait for hours until the proper official arrived. The marriage ceremony was properly performed, champagne was served. Hitler the “gentleman” had acted correctly-making it clear, however, that only imminent death could move him to legitimize his relationship to his mistress. (With a modicum of consideration, not to speak of affection, he could have made this gesture some weeks earlier.) Hitler and the killer functioned as before. Even his marriage to Eva did not hinder him from having her brother-in-law executed for alleged disloyalty. Shortly before, he had his physician, Dr. Karl Brandt, loyal to him since 1934, sentenced to death by a court martial that consisted of Goebbels, SS General Berger, and the Youth Leader, Axmann, with Hitler acting as both “prosecutor” and supreme authority. The reason for the death sentence, on which Hitler insisted, was that Brandt had left his family in Thuringia to be “rolled over by the Americans” rather than bring them to Obersalzberg; the suspicion was that Brandt was using his wife as a courier to the Americans. (Brandt’s life was saved by Himmler who at that time was trying to ingratiate himself with the Americans.)

Regardless of the personal and social reasons for Hitler’s veneer it was also an important asset. It helped him to deceive those industrial, military, and nationalist political leaders of Germany, as well as many politicians of foreign countries who might have been repelled by his brutality and destructiveness. To be sure, many saw through his facade, but many more

did not, and thus a favorable climate was created that permitted Hitler to follow his path of destruction.

Defects of Will and Realism

Hitler himself considered his greatest asset to be his unbending will. Whether he was right depends on what one means by “will.” Looking at his career, a first glance would seem to indicate that he was, indeed, a man of extraordinary willpower. It was his aim to be great, and despite that he started out as a nobody, within only twenty years he had realized his aims beyond anything even he could have dreamed of. Does it not require an extraordinary will to achieve such an aim?

This notion becomes questionable, however, if we recall how little willpower Hitler showed as a child and as a youth. We have seen that he was a loafer, undisciplined, and unwilling to make any effort. This is not what we would expect to find in a person equipped with strong willpower. The fact is that what Hitler called his “will” were his passions which fired him on and relentlessly drove him to seek their realization. His will was as boundless and raw as that of a six-year-old child, as Speer said. A six-year-old who makes no compromise and throws a tantrum when he is frustrated may be said to have a strong “will,” but it would be more correct to say that he is driven by his impulses and is incapable of accepting frustration. When Hitler saw no opportunity to achieve his aim, he merely marked time, loafed and did just enough to make a living. In the years until the First World War he had not the slightest idea, nor any semblance of a plan to achieve his aim. Had it not been for the political situation after the war, he would probably have continued to drift, maybe getting minor jobs, although it would have been very difficult for him due to his lack of discipline. His best occupational chance might have been as a salesman of a commodity of questionable value whose success depends mainly on forceful persuasion. But his waiting was rewarded; his fantastic desires and his great talent for persuasion became linked with social and political reality. The reactionary army officers hired him not only to spy on other soldiers, but to convert them to reactionary, militaristic ideas. From these small beginnings Hitler became the supersalesman of a commodity for which there was much demand on the part of disappointed and frustrated “little men” and in whose sale first the army and then other powerful groups were vitally interested-a

nationalist, anti-Communist, militarist ideology. When he had proven his success in this job, considerable sectors among German bankers and industrialists supported him financially to such an extent that he was able to seize power.

The weakness of Hitler's will shows in his hesitancy and doubt when he had to make a decision, a fact on which many observers have commented. He had the tendency, to be found among many people who lack a strong will, to let events come to a point where he is spared the need to make a decision because the decision is forced upon him; but it does not do this by itself. Hitler stoked the fire, closed more and more avenues of retreat, brought the whole situation to a boiling point where he would *have* to act as he did. With his self-deceptive technique he spared himself the difficulty of having to decide. His "decision" was actually submission to an inescapable *fait accompli*, but one of his own doing. Just to give one example: it seems doubtful that he originally wanted to conquer Poland, for whose reactionary leader, Colonel Beck, he had great sympathy. But when Beck rejected Hitler's relatively mild demands, the latter got angry and heated up the situation with Poland to a point that left no other outcome but war.

Once Hitler had decided on a course, he pursued it with unwavering determination and with what one *might* call an "iron will" to win. In order to understand this seeming contradiction we must examine, however briefly, the concept of will. First, it is useful to distinguish between "rational will" and "irrational will." By rational will I understand the energetic effort to reach a rationally desirable aim; this requires realism, discipline, patience, and the overcoming of self-indulgence. By irrational will I mean a passionate striving, fed by the energy of irrational passions that lacks the qualities needed for rational will.[36] Irrational will is like a river bursting a dam; it is powerful, but man is not the master of this will; he is driven by it, forced by it, its slave. Hitler's will was, indeed, strong, if we understand it as irrational will. But his rational will was weak.

In addition to the weakness of his will, another quality tended to undo what Hitler's other gifts had helped him to achieve: his defective sense of reality. Hitler's poor contact with reality, as we have seen, as already evident in his absorption in boys' war games up to the age of sixteen. This phantasy world was much more real to him than the real world. His plan to be an artist had little connection with reality—it was mainly a daydream—

and his activity as a commercial artist in no way corresponded to his vision. People were not fully real to him, either; they were all instruments: he remained without contact even though he was often a shrewd judge.[37] Yet while Hitler did not fully perceive reality, neither did he live exclusively in a world of phantasy. His was a world with a particular blend between reality and phantasy in which nothing was entirely real and nothing was entirely unreal. In some instances, particularly in his insights into the motivations of his opponents, he had a remarkable appreciation of reality. He was not impressed by what people *said*, but by what he recognized as their real-implicit or not even fully conscious-motivations. A good example is his estimate of British-French political behavior. It can be said that in a certain sense Hitler's victory began with the unwillingness of Great Britain to follow the decision of the League of Nations in regard to an effective blockade of Italy after Mussolini began his attack against Ethiopia, 1935-36. Under all kinds of subterfuges Italy continued to receive oil, which was vitally necessary for conducting the war, while Ethiopia had the greatest difficulty even in obtaining arms from abroad. The next event that emboldened Hitler was the handling of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39. Great Britain prevented the constitutional government of Spain from importing arms for its defense, and the French government, under the Socialist, Blum, did not dare to act without Great Britain's approval. However the committee of democratic powers that was charged with enforcing nonintervention in Spain did nothing to prevent Hitler or Mussolini from continuing their military intervention in favor of Franco.[38] The next event was the failure of the French and the British to resist Hitler's occupation of the demilitarized Rhineland in 1936, at a time when the German army was completely unprepared for war. (Hitler remarked in the Table Talks [H. Picker, 1965] that if France had had a real statesman at the time, the French would have resisted his occupation of the Rhineland.) The last step, Chamberlain's visit to beg Hitler for moderation, was hardly necessary to confirm Hitler's conviction that Great Britain and France were unwilling to act upon their words. In this instance Hitler showed the realistic insight into human behavior of a shrewd horse trader who recognizes when the other party is bluffing. What Hitler did not see was the wider political and economic reality. He failed to appreciate Great Britain's traditional interest in the balance of power on the Continent; he did not recognize that Chamberlain and his circle did not represent the political

interests of all the Conservatives, much less public opinion among the entire British population. He relied on the opinion of Joachim von Ribbentrop, a man with a facile, but very superficial intelligence, completely unprepared to understand the political, economic, and social intricacies of the British system.

The same failure of realistic judgment is shown in his lack of any real knowledge about the United States and in his failure to attempt to inform himself. All relevant reports agree that he was content with superficial ideas, such as that the Americans were too soft to be good soldiers, that America was run by the Jews, that the American government would not dare to enter the war because the country was so full of conflicts that a revolution might break out.

Hitler's strategy shows an equal lack of full appreciation of reality and objectivity. In his richly documented and penetrating analysis, P. E. Schramm (1965) points out this defect in Hitler's strategic approach. Schramm does not try to minimize Hitler's merits as a strategist, and he mentions three instances (according to General A. Jodl) of bold and imaginative plans. But from 1942 onward, Hitler's judgment in military matters was very defective. He did the same as he had done with his reading material; he picked out those data in military reports that fitted in with his plans and paid no attention to those that would have made him question them. His orders not to retreat, which led to the catastrophe of Stalingrad and heavy losses of soldiers at many other parts of the front, is characterized by Schramm as "increasingly senseless." His plans for the last offensive attack in the Ardennes neglected to take into account important factors in the actual tactical situation. Schramm notes that Hitler's strategy was a "prestige" and "propaganda" strategy. Lack of realism made him fail to fully recognize that warfare and propaganda are determined by different laws and principals. Hitler's estrangement from reality becomes grotesquely manifest when, on April 24, 1945, two days before his suicide, after he had already planned his end, he issued an order that "fundamental decisions have to be brought to the attention of the Fuhrer 36 hours before [their execution]." (P. E. Schramm. 1965.)

The blending of Hitler's defective will with his defective sense of reality leads to the question whether he really had the will to win or whether unconsciously, and in spite of all apparent efforts to the contrary, his course was set toward catastrophe. Several very sensitive observers have expressed

the strong suspicion that the latter might have been the case. C. Burckhardt, one of the keenest observers of Hitler, writes: “It is not altogether far-fetched to assume that the insatiable hater operating within him (Hitler) was connected in unconscious parts of his being with the veiled but always present certainty that the end would be marked by the most horrible failure and by personal extinction, as, in fact, happened in the Reichschancellery on April 30, 1945.” (C. Burckhardt, 1965.) Speer reports that in the years before the war when Hitler discussed his architectural plans with such enthusiasm, he dimly sensed that Hitler did not really believe in their realization; this was not a clear conviction, but a kind of intuitive feeling he had.[39] J. Brosse expresses the same idea; he raises the question whether Hitler ever believed in final victory, or even really desired it. (J. Brosse, 1972.) On the basis of my analysis of Hitler I have arrived at a similar conclusion. I question whether a man with such intense and all-absorbing destructiveness could in the depth of his being really have wanted the constructive work that victory would have implied. Of course, Burckhardt, Speer, Brosse, and I are not describing the conscious part of Hitler’s mind. The assumption that he neither believed in nor wanted to realize his artistic and political dreams refers to what one would have to consider as being entirely unconscious; without the concept of unconscious motivations the statement that Hitler might not have wanted to win sounds absurd.[40]

Hitler was a gambler; he gambled with the lives of all Germans as well as with his own life. When the game was up and he had lost, there was not even too much reason for regret. He had had what he had always wanted: power and the satisfaction of his hate and of his lust for destruction. His defeat could not take this satisfaction from him. The megalomaniac and destroyer had not really lost. Those who lost were the millions of human beings—Germans, members of other nations and of racial minorities—for whom death in battle was the mildest form of suffering. Since Hitler was entirely without compassion for anyone, their suffering caused him no pain or remorse.

In analyzing Hitler we have found a number of severely pathological traits: we hypothesized the presence of a semi-autistic streak in the child; we found extreme narcissism, lack of contact with others, flaws in his perception of reality, intense necrophilia. One can legitimately assume the presence of a psychotic, perhaps schizophrenic streak in him. But does this mean that Hitler was a “madman,” that he suffered from a psychosis or

from paranoia, as it has been sometimes said? The answer, I believe, is in the negative. In spite of the mad streak in Hitler he was sane enough to pursue his aims purposefully and—for a while—successfully. With all the errors in judgment he made due to his narcissism and his destructiveness, it cannot be denied that he was a demagogue and a politician of outstanding skill who at no point showed frankly psychotic reactions. Even in his last days, when he was a physically and mentally broken man, he remained controlled. As to his paranoid tendencies, his suspiciousness was realistically sufficiently well founded—as various plots against him have demonstrated—that one can hardly call it a manifestation of paranoia. Certainly, had Hitler been a defendant in a court of justice, even in a most impartial one, a plea of insanity would have had no chance. Yet although in conventional terms Hitler was not a psychotic man, in dynamic, interpersonal terms he was a very sick man. The whole question whether Hitler can be considered insane is beset by the difficulty that has been discussed earlier about the questionable value of psychiatric labels; statements about the difference between a psychotic streak and a full-fledged psychosis may have their value in a court of justice for deciding whether a person should be sent to prison or to a mental hospital, but in the last analysis what we are dealing with are interpersonal processes that defy such labels. But clinical analysis must not be used to obscure the *moral* problem of evil. Just as there are evil and benign "sane" men, there are evil madmen and benign madmen. Evilness must be seen for what it is, and moral judgment is not suspended by clinical diagnosis. But even the most evil man is human and calls for our compassion.

Concluding this analysis of Hitler's character a few words may be useful to indicate the purpose of incorporating this lengthy material, as well as that about Himmler, in this study. Aside from the obvious theoretical aim of clarifying the concept of sadism and necrophilia by presenting clinical illustrations, I had still another aim: that of pointing to the main fallacy which prevents people from recognizing potential Hitlers before they have shown their true faces. This fallacy lies in the belief that a thoroughly destructive and evil man must be a devil-and look his part; that he must be devoid of any positive quality; that he must bear the sign of Cain so visibly that everyone can recognize his destructiveness from afar. Such devils exist, but they are rare. As I indicated earlier, much more often the intensely destructive person will show a front of kindliness; courtesy; love of family,

of children, of animals; he will speak of his ideals and good intentions. But not only this. There is hardly a man who is utterly devoid of any kindness, of any good intention. If he were, he would be on the verge of insanity, except congenital "moral idiots." *Hence, as long as one believes that the evil man wears horns, one will not discover an evil man.*

The naive assumption that an evil man is easily recognizable results in a great danger: one fails to recognize evil men before they have begun their work of destruction. I believe that the majority of people do not have the intensely destructive character of a Hitler. But even if one would estimate that such persons formed 10 percent of our population, there are enough of them to be very dangerous if they attain influence and power. To be sure, not every destroyer would become a Hitler, because he would lack Hitler's talents; he might only become an efficient member of the SS. But on the other hand, Hitler was no genius, and his talents were not unique. What was unique was the sociopolitical situation in which he could rise; there are probably hundreds of Hitlers among us who would come forth if their historical hour arrived.

To analyze a figure like Hitler with objectivity and without passion is not only dictated by scientific conscience but also because it is the condition of learning an important lesson for the present and the future. Any analysis that would distort Hitler's picture by depriving him of his humanity would only intensify the tendency to be blind to the potential Hitlers unless they wear horns.

[1]In the descriptions of Hitler's parents and his infancy, childhood, and youth I follow mainly the two most important works dealing with his early years, the excellent books by B. F. Smith (1967) and W. Maser (1971). I have also used A. Kubizek (1954) and A. Hitler (1943). Hitler's book largely serves propaganda purposes and contains many untruths; Kubizek, the friend of Hitler's youth who admired him in their youth as well as when Hitler was in power, is to be used with some caution. Maser, though a historian, is often unreliable in the use of his sources. Smith is by far the most objective and reliable source for Hitler's youth.

[2]As indicated before, intrusion as a condition for autism was found by students of the autistic child.

[3]There are two psychoanalytic attempts to account for Hitler's evilness: (1) the conventional orthodox analysis by W. C. Langer (1972), which was originally written in 1943 as a report for the Office of Strategic Services and classified as "Secret"; (2) the study by J. Brosse (1972). Langer's

analysis, especially at a time when the data on Hitler's life was scarce, has some good points, although it is greatly hampered by his theoretical frame of reference. Langer stresses that Hitler's early attachment to his mother led to the formation of a particularly intense Oedipus complex (i.e., the wish to rid himself of the father), and furthermore, that Hitler must have observed his parents during sexual intercourse and that he must have become indignant both against his father, for his "brutality," and against his mother for her "betrayal." Since all boys are supposed to have an Oedipus complex and to have witnessed their parents' intercourse (particularly in those classes with less living space than the middle class), it is hard to see why a condition that is practically universal should explain a specific character, not to speak of such an abnormal one as Hitler's.

The psychoanalytic study of Hitler by J. Brosse has more material and is very sensitive; Brosse recognized clearly Hitler's hatred of life and in this respect comes to similar conclusions as those in this book. The only element that mars Brosse's book is his need to couch his findings in terms of the libido theory. He goes one step beyond the conventional theory of the Oedipus complex and of the "primal scene." The deepest, driving, unconscious force in Hitler "consisted in the murder of the phallic mother, i.e., not only of the father but also of the mother—of father and mother united in the sexual act… What he wants to reduce to nothing is not so much his birth but his conception, that is, in other words, the 'primal scene,' the original scene, the intercourse of his parents; and not the scene the child could have witnessed, but that which took place absolutely before him … at which he was present in imagination and retrospectively, at which he was in a certain degree even potentially present, since it had to do with his own conception… Hate against life is nothing but this: hate against the act by which the parents have given him life…" (J. Brosse, 1972. This as well as further quotations from Brosse, are my translation.) As a symbolic, surrealistic description of the total hate against life, this imagery has its merits. But as a factual analysis of the cause for Hitler's hate against life it borders on the absurd.

I attempted a short analysis of Hitler's character based on the concept of the authoritarian-sadomasochistic character without, however, dealing with Hitler's childhood history. (E. Fromm, 1941a.) I believe that what I wrote then is still valid, but that Hitler's sadism is secondary in comparison with his necrophilia, which is dealt with in the following analysis.

[4]It can be argued, of course, that the evidence does not show us his *unconscious* disappointment and resentment. But since one cannot discover any signs of it, such an argument is without value. Its only basis is the dogmatic assumption that the birth of a sibling must have such an effect. This results in a circuitous reasoning in which one takes as a fact what the theory requires, and then claims that the theory is confirmed by the facts.

[5]Since Kubizek admired Hitler when they were young as well as later, when Hitler was in power, it is impossible to say whether the facts he reports are true, except when they are corroborated by other

sources; his own “impressions” are highly biased in Hitler’s favor. Maser gives an even more glowing description of Hitler’s loving kindness to his mother and of his despair at her death. Maser’s description is based on a memorandum that the Jewish physician, Dr. E. Bloch, who treated Hitler’s mother, wrote thirty-one years later in 1938 for the Nazi authorities. With all due respect to the memory of Dr. Bloch, a statement written by a Jew, in Germany, in 1938, for the Nazis can hardly be considered unbiased, but motivated rather by an attempt to curry favor; this is humanly understandable, but deprives the document of any value as a historical source. That the historian Maser does not even question the validity of Bloch’s statement is one example for many other severe defects in his method of using sources, some of which I shall have occasion to mention further on.

[6]His teacher, E. Huemer, said this about his former pupil when he was a witness for Hitler after the unsuccessful putsch in Munich: “Hitler was decidedly talented, even though one-sidely, but had little self-control; at the very least he was also considered stubborn, willful, argumentative and short-tempered, and it was certainly difficult for him to adapt to the framework of a school organization. He was also not very industrious; otherwise he would have been much more successful, considering his undeniable talents.” (W. Maser, 1971.)

[7]Hitler’s own statements in *Mein Kampf* about *his* poverty are essentially untrue.

[8]In his attempt to make the most of Hitler’s seriousness in regard to studying art, Maser reports that Hitler took lessons from a sculptor, the high school professor, Panholzer. But the only evidence he offers for this statement is a letter written by the mother of Hitler’s landlady to the professor of stage design, Roller, asking him to see Hitler and to advise him. Maser quotes no evidence to show what the result of this visit was provided it took place at all. He only mentions that thirty years later Hitler named Panholzer (according to the grammatical construction of Maser’s sentence it should read Roller) as his teacher. This is one of the many instances where Maser uses a statement made by Hitler about himself as sufficient evidence. But how Maser could know that Hitler had to work “in a disciplined and orderly fashion” at Panholzer’s atelier remains a mystery, as well as why the budding painter and architect should have wanted to take instructions from a sculptor. (W. Maser, 1971.)

[9]The following text is based mainly on B. F. Smith (1967).

[10]Of the voluminous literature on Hitler and his period from 1914 to 1946 I have used mainly A. Speer (1970) and W. Maser (1971), the latter, however, with some caution, as already noted in connection with his references to Hitler’s youth. I owe a great deal of information and insight, also, to numerous personal communications from Albert Speer. (Speer has genuinely repented his participation in the Nazi regime, and I believe his statement that he has become an entirely different man.) Additional valuable sources are: P. E. Schramm *(*1965*)* and H. Krausnick et al. (1968),

important because both quote many important sources, and Hitler's *Table Talks* (H. Picker, 1965) with an Introduction by Schramm, an excellent source. I have also used E. Hanfstaengl (1970), but with great caution. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1943) served little as a historical source. Many other books were consulted, and some of these, too, are quoted in the text.

[11]This, as well as other quotes from German and French sources, are my translation.

[12]Handwritten notes by Hitler's former senior officer and later adjutant, Consul General Fritz Wiedeman (retired). Hitler's utterances were made on almost the same day on which Goering ordered a "Reich Central Office" for the emigration of the Jews to be headed by Eichmann. Eichmann had already worked out a method earlier to expel the Jews. H. Krausnick et al. (1968) suggest that Hitler may have disliked this less extreme solution, but agreed to it "because for the time it was the only practical way."

[13]Cf. the discussion of Germany as a mother symbol, p. 420.

[14]A. Speer, personal communication.

[15]This is a telling manifestation of his "oral-sadistic," exploitative character.

[16]Speer reports that the conversations during meals in Berlin were not less trivial and boring, and that Hitler "did not even try to cover up the frequent repetitions which were so embarrassing to his listeners." (A. Speer, 1970.)

[17]In the *Table Talks* with the generals at his headquarters in 1941-42 Hitler obviously made a greater effort and tried to impress his guests with his erudition and knowledge. These talks consisted of endless monologues ranging over all possible subjects. It was the same Hitler who had lectured the loners in the Männerheim. But now his audience consisted of the leaders of the German army; his self-confidence had been greatly increased and his range (though not depth) of knowledge had been broadened by years of further reading. Yet in the last analysis the change is only superficial.

[18]Maser's statement is also confirmed by Speer in a personal communication.

[19]Maser's statement is based on General W. Warlimont's authority (1964).

[20]A. Speer, personal communication.

[21]A. Speer, personal communication.

[22]Cf. the discussion on narcissism in chapter 9.

[23]Cf. W. Maser (1971). J. Brosse (1972), although he admits there is no direct evidence for it, bases his claim that Hitler had strong latent homosexual tendencies on the tortuous argument that this is likely because Hitler had paranoid tendencies, his reasoning being based on the Freudian assumption of the close relationship between paranoia and unconscious homosexuality.

[24]Unfortunately, Hanfstaengl is not a reliable witness. His autobiography is largely self-serving; in it he attempts to present himself as a man who tried to exercise a good influence on Hitler, and who, after his break with Hitler, became an "adviser" to President Roosevelt—a rather exaggerated claim. Nevertheless, in his description of Hitler's relations with women we can grant him a basic credibility, since this topic did not serve to enhance his own political stature.

[25]A. Speer, personal communication.

[26]In Hebrew the word *norah* has the same double meaning; it is used as an attribute for God and represents an archaic attitude in which God is simultaneously horrible and sublime.

[27]A. Speer, personal communication.

[28]We must leak the question open whether Hitler's explosions of temper were the result of organic neurophysiologic factors or whether such factors at least lowered his threshold for anger.

[29]Cf. H. S. Ziegler (1965); also H. S. Ziegler, ed. (1970). According to various reports we can expect quite a number of books and articles to appear in Germany, England, and the United States in the near future that will try to present a refurbished picture of Hitler, the great leader.

[30]On one occasion he rationalized this unwillingness by telling Speer that most German scholars would probably not want to see him. This was, regrettably perhaps, not true, and Hitler must have known it. (A. Speer, 1970.)

[31]Maser, in order to make the most of Hitler's talent as a painter, explains Hitler's method of copying thus: "Hitler copied not because he lacked talent … but because he was too lazy to go out and paint." (W. Maser, 1971.) This statement is an example of Maser's tendency to elevate Hitler's stature, especially since it is so obviously wrong—in one respect at least: the one activity Hitler *did* like was to *go out*, albeit to walk the streets. Another example of Maser's bias in favor of Hitler's painting talent is his statement that Dr. Bloch (the Jewish physician who treated Hitler's mother), in keeping some watercolors that Hitler had given him, "certainly did not keep [them] until after 1938 because

Adolf and Klara Hitler had been patients until 1907." Maser thus implies that the fact that the doctor kept the paintings indicates that the paintings had artistic value. But why should the doctor not have kept them just because the Hitlers had once been his patients? He would not have been the first physician to keep mementos expressing the gratitude of his patients—and after 1933 any Hitler memento was certainly a great asset for a man in loch's situation.

[32]I am indebted to Mr. Speer for showing me these sketches; they offer a key to the nature of Hitler's pedantic, lifeless character.

[33]Schramm notes that Hitler made no mention during the *Table Talks* of any of the horrible orders he gave during the period in which these table conversations took place.

[34]A. Speer, personal communication.

[35]Chaplin's Monsieur Verdoux, the kind, middle-class husband, who makes a living by murdering wealthy women, offers a certain parallel.

[36]Cf. the discussion on rational and irrational passions in chapter 10.

[37]Speer expresses Hitler's lack of contact with reality in a slightly different, very intuitive formulation: "There was actually something insubstantial about him. But this was perhaps a permanent quality he had. In retrospect I sometimes ask myself whether this intangibility, this insubstantiality, had not characterized him from early youth up to the moment of his suicide. It sometimes seems to me that his seizures of violence could come upon him all the more strongly because there were no human emotions in him to oppose them. He simply could not let anyone approach his inner being because that core was lifeless, empty." (A. Speer, 1970.)

[38]Sir A. Cadogan, Permanent Undersecretary in the British Foreign Office, a Conservative who helped to shape British policy at that time, gives an excellent and detailed picture of the handling of the Spanish Civil War that was largely motivated by the Conservatives' sympathy with Mussolini and Hitler, their inclination to permit Hitler to attack the Soviet Union, and their own incapacity to appreciate Hitler's intentions. (Sir A. Cadogan, 1972.)

[39]A. Speer, personal communication.

[40]There is a great deal of clinical material that demonstrates that people can strive for their own destruction, although their conscious aim is exactly the opposite. Not only psychoanalysis but also great drama offer such material.

Epilogue: On the Ambiguity of Hope

IN THIS STUDY I HAVE tried to demonstrate that prehistorical man, living in bands as hunter and food gatherer, was characterized by a minimum of destructiveness and an optimum of cooperation and sharing, and that only with the increasing productivity and division of labor, the formation of a large surplus, and the building of states with hierarchies and elites, large-scale destructiveness and cruelty came into existence and grew as civilization and the role of power grew.

Has this study contributed valid arguments in favor of the thesis that aggression and destructiveness can once again assume a minimal role in the fabric of human motivations? I believe it has, and I hope that many of my readers do too.

As far as aggression is *biologically* given in man's genes, it is not spontaneous, but a defense against threats to man's vital interests, that of his growth and his and the species' survival. This defensive aggression was relatively small under certain primitive conditions—when no man was much of a threat to another. Man has gone through an extraordinary development since then. It is legitimate to imagine that man will complete the full circle and construct a society in which no one is threatened: not the child by the parent; not the parent by the superior; no social class by another; no nation by a superpower. To achieve this aim is tremendously difficult for economic, political, cultural and psychological reasons—and the added difficulty that the nations of the world worship idols—and different idols—and thus do not understand each other, even though they understand each other's languages. To ignore these difficulties is folly; but the empirical study of all data shows that a real possibility exists to build such a world in a foreseeable future if the political and psychological roadblocks are removed.

The *malignant* forms of aggression, on the other hand—sadism and necrophilia—are *not* innate; hence, they can be substantially reduced when the socioeconomic conditions are replaced by conditions that are favorable

to the full development of man's genuine needs and capacities; to the development of human self-activity and man's creative power as its own end. Exploitation and manipulation produce boredom and triviality; they cripple man, and all factors that make man into a psychic cripple turn him also into a sadist or a destroyer.

This position will be characterized by some as "overoptimistic," "utopian," or "unrealistic." In order to appreciate the merits of such criticism a discussion of the concept of the ambiguity of hope and of the nature of optimism and pessimism seems called for.

Assume that I am planning a weekend trip to the country and it is doubtful that the weather will be fine. I may say, "I'm optimistic," as far as the weather is concerned. But if my child is gravely sick and his life hangs in the balance, to say, "I'm optimistic," would seem strange to sensitive ears, because in this context the expression sounds detached and distant. Yet I could not very well say, "I am *convinced* my child will live," because, under the circumstances, I have no realistic basis for being convinced.

What, then, could I say?

The most adequate words would perhaps be: "I have faith my child will live." But "faith," because of its theological implications, is not a word for today. Yet it is the best we have, because faith implies an extremely important element: my ardent, intense wish for my child to live, hence my doing everything possible to bring about his recovery. I am not just an observer, separate from my child, as I am in the case of being "optimistic." I am part of the situation that I observe; I am *engaged;* my child about whom I, the "subject," make a prognostic statement is not an "object"; my faith is rooted in my relatedness to my child; it is a blend of knowledge and of participation. This is true, of course, only if by faith is meant "rational faith" (E. Fromm, 1947a), which is based on the clear awareness of all relevant data, and not, like "irrational faith," an illusion based on our desires.

Optimism is an alienated form of faith, pessimism an alienated form of despair. If one truly responds to man and his future, i.e., concernedly and "responsibly," one can respond only by faith or by despair. Rational faith as well as rational despair are based on the most thorough, critical knowledge of all the factors that are relevant for the survival of man. The basis of rational faith in man is the presence of a real possibility for his salvation:

the basis for rational despair would be the knowledge that no such possibility can be seen.

One point needs to be emphasized in this context. Most people are quite ready to denounce faith in man's improvement as unrealistic: but they do not recognize that despair is often just as unrealistic. It is easy to say: "Man has always been a killer." But the statement nevertheless is not correct, for it neglects to take into account the intricacies of the history of destructiveness. It is equally easy to say, "The desire to exploit others is just human nature"; but again, the statement neglects (or distorts) the facts. In brief, the statement, "Human nature is evil," is not a bit more realistic than the statement, "Human nature is good." But the first statement is much easier to make: anyone who wants to prove man's evilness finds followers most readily, for he offers everybody an alibi for his own sins—and seemingly risks nothing. Yet the spreading of irrational despair is in itself destructive, as all untruth is; it discourages and confuses. Preaching irrational faith or announcing false Messiahs is hardly less destructive—it seduces and then paralyzes.

The attitude of the majority is neither that of faith nor that of despair, but, unfortunately, that of complete indifference to the future of man. With those who are not entirely indifferent, the attitude is that of "optimism" or of "pessimism." The optimists are the believers in the dogma of the continuous march of "progress." They are accustomed to identifying human achievement with technical achievement, human freedom with freedom *from* direct coercion and the consumer's freedom *to* choose between many allegedly different commodities. The dignity, cooperativeness, kindness of the primitive do not impress them; technical achievement, wealth, toughness do. Centuries of rule over technically backward people of different color have left their stamp on the optimists' minds. How could a "savage" be human and equal, not to speak of superior, to the men who can fly to the moon—or by pushing a button, destroy millions of living beings?

The optimists live well enough, at least for the moment, and they can afford to be "optimists." Or at least that is what they think because they are so alienated that even the threat to the future of their grandchildren does not genuinely affect them.

The "pessimists" are really not very different from the optimists. They live just as comfortably and are just as little engaged. The fate of humanity is as little their concern as it is the optimists'. They do not feel despair; if

they did, they would not, and could not, live as contentedly as they do. And while their pessimism functions largely to protect the pessimists from any inner demand to do something, by projecting the idea that *nothing can be done,* the optimists defend them selves against the same inner demand by persuading them selves that everything is moving in the right direction anyway, so *nothing needs to be done.*

The position taken in this book is one of rational faith in man's capacity to extricate himself from what seems the fatal web of circumstances that he has created. It is the position of those who are neither "optimists" nor "pessimists," but radicals who have rational faith in man's capacity to avoid the ultimate catastrophe. This humanist radicalism goes to the roots, and thus to the causes; it seeks to liberate man from the chains of illusions; it postulates that fundamental changes are necessary, not only in our economic and political structure but also in our values, in our concept of man's aims, and in our personal conduct.

To have faith means to dare, to think the unthinkable, yet to act within the limits of the realistically possible; it is the paradoxical hope to expect the Messiah every day, yet not to lose heart when he has not come at the appointed hour. This hope is not passive and it is not patient; on the contrary, it is impatient and active, looking for every possibility of action within the realm of real possibilities. Least of all is it passive as far as the growth and the liberation of one's own person are concerned. To be sure, there are severe limitations to personal development determined by the social structure. But those alleged radicals who counsel that no personal change is possible or even desirable within present-day society use their revolutionary ideology as an excuse for their personal resistance to inner change.

The situation of mankind today is too serious to permit us to listen to the demagogues—least of all demagogues who are attracted to destruction —or even to the leaders who use only their brains and whose hearts have hardened. Critical and radical thought will only bear fruit when it is blended with the most precious quality man is endowed with—the love of life.

Appendix:

Freud’s Theory of Aggressiveness and Destructiveness

1 The Evolution of Freud’s Concept of Aggressiveness and Destructiveness

PERHAPS THE MOST REMARKABLE element in Freud’s study of aggression is that until 1920 he paid hardly any attention to human aggressivity and destructiveness. He himself expressed his bewilderment over this fact many years later in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930): “But I can no longer understand how we can have overlooked the ubiquity of non-erotic aggressivity and destructiveness and can have failed to give it its due place in our interpretation of life.” (S. Freud, 1930.)

In order to understand this peculiar blind spot, it will be helpful to put ourselves into the mood of the European middle classes at the time before the First World War. There had been no major war since 1871. The bourgeoisie was progressing steadily, both politically and socially, and the sharp antagonism between the classes was becoming smaller, due to the steady improvements in the situation of the working class. The world seemed peaceful and becoming ever more civilized, especially when one did not pay much attention to the greater part of the human race living in Asia, Africa, and South America, under conditions of utter poverty and degradation. Human destructiveness seemed to be a factor that had played a role in the Dark Ages and during many earlier centuries, but had now been replaced by reason and goodwill. The psychological problems that were being uncovered were those arising from the overstrict moral code of the middle class, and Freud was so impressed with evidence of the damaging results of sexual repression that he simply failed to attach importance to the problem of aggressiveness, until it could not be overlooked any longer due

to the First World War. This war constitutes the dividing line within the development of Freud's theory of aggressivity.

In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (*1905*)* Freud considered aggressiveness to be one of the "component instincts" of the sexual instinct. He wrote: "Thus sadism would correspond to an aggressive component of the sexual instinct which has become independent and exaggerated and, by displacement, has usurped the leading position." (S. Freud, 1905.*)*[1]

However, as so often with Freud, quite in contrast to the main line of his theory, he had a thought that was to remain dormant until much later. In section 4 of the *Three Essays* he wrote: "It may be assumed that the impulses of cruelty arise from sources which are in fact *independent of sexuality*, but may become united with it at an early stage." (S. Freud, 1905. Italics added.)

But in spite of this remark, four years later Freud stated very explicitly in the story of Little Hans in his *Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy:* "I cannot bring myself to assume the existence of a special aggressive instinct alongside of the familiar instincts of self-preservation and of sex, and on an equal footing with them." (S. Freud, 1909.) One can recognize in this formulation a certain hesitancy in Freud's statement. "I cannot bring myself to assume" is not quite as strong as a simple and complete negation would be, and the additional qualification "on an equal footing" seems to leave the possibility that there could be an independent aggressiveness if it were not on an equal footing.

In *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes* (1915) Freud continued both lines of thought—that of destructiveness as a component of the sexual instinct, and as a force independent of sexuality:

> Preliminary stages of love emerge as provisional sexual aims while the sexual instincts are passing through their complicated development. As the first of these aims we recognize the phase of incorporating or devouring—a type of love which is consistent with abolishing the object's separate existence and which may therefore be described as ambivalent. At the higher stage of the pregenital sadistic-anal organization, the striving for the object appears in the form of an urge for mastery, to which injury or annihilation of the object is a matter of indifference. Love in this form and at this preliminary stage is hardly

> to be distinguished from hate in its attitude towards the object. Not until the genital organization is established does love become the opposite of hate. (S. Freud, 1915.)

But in this same paper Freud also takes up the other position that he had expressed in the *Three Essays*—although altered in 1915—namely, that of an aggressiveness *independent* from the sexual instinct. This alternative hypothesis assumes that the ego instincts are the source of aggressiveness. Freud wrote:

> Hate, as a relation to objects is older than *love. It derives from the narcissistic ego's primordial repudiation of the external world*[2] with its outpouring of stimuli. As an expression of the reaction of unpleasure evoked by objects, *it always remains in an intimate relation with the self-preservative instincts;* so that sexual and ego-instincts can readily develop an antithesis which repeats that of love and hate. When the ego-instincts dominate the sexual function, as is the case at the stage of the sadistic-anal organization, they impart the qualities of hate to the instinctual aim as well. (S. Freud, 1915. Italics added.)

Here Freud assumes that hate is older than love and that it is rooted in the ego instincts, or instincts of self-preservation, which first of all repudiate the "stream of stimuli" flowing from the outside world and are the antithesis to the sexual impulses. It should be mentioned in passing how important this position is for Freud's whole model of man. The infant is seen as primarily repudiating stimuli and hating the world for its intrusion. This position is contrary to the one supported by a good deal of clinical evidence as it has emerged recently, showing that man, and even an infant a few days after birth, is eager for stimuli, needs them, does not always hate the world for its intrusion.

Freud even goes a step further in his formulation about hate in the same paper:

> The ego hates, abhors and pursues with intent to destroy all objects which are a source of unpleasurable feeling for it, without taking into account whether they mean a frustration of sexual satisfaction or of the satisfaction of self-preservative needs. Indeed, it may be asserted that *the true prototypes of the relation of hate are derived not from sexual*

> *life, but from the ego's struggle to preserve and maintain itself.* (S. Freud, 1915. Italics added.)

With the paper on *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes* (1915) the first phase of Freud's thinking about destructiveness ends. We saw that he followed two concepts simultaneously: aggressiveness as a part of the sexual drive (oral and anal sadism), and aggressiveness as being independent from the sexual instinct, as a quality of the ego instincts which oppose and hate the intrusion of outside stimuli and obstacles to the satisfaction of sexual needs and those for self-preservation.

In 1920, with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud begins a fundamental revision of his whole theory of instincts. In this work Freud attributed to the "compulsion to repeat" the characteristics of an instinct; here, too, he postulated for the first time the new dichotomy of Eros and the death instinct, the nature of which he discussed in greater detail in *The Ego and the Id* (1923) and in his further writings. This new dichotomy of life (Eros) and death instinct(s)[3] takes the place of the original dichotomy between ego and sexual instincts. Though Freud attempts to identify Eros with libido, the new polarity constitutes an entirely different concept of drive from the old one.[4]

Freud himself gives a succinct description of the development of his new theory in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930). He wrote,

> To begin with, ego-instincts and object-instincts confronted each other. It was to denote the energy of the latter and only the latter instincts that I introduced the term "libido."[5] Thus the antithesis was between the ego-instincts and the "libidinal" instincts of love (in its widest sense) which were directed to an object.[6] … But these discrepancies [with regard to sadism] were got over; after all, sadism was clearly a part of sexual life, in the activities of which affection could be replaced by cruelty… The decisive step forward was the introduction of the concept of narcissism—that is to say, the discovery that the ego itself is cathected with libido, that the ego, indeed, is the libido's original home, and remains to some extent its headquarters.[7] … My next step was taken in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), when the compulsion to repeat and the conservative character of instinctual life first attracted my attention. Starting from speculations on the

> beginning of life and from biological parallels, I drew the conclusion that, *besides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join it into ever larger units, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primaeval, inorganic state.* That is to say, as well as Eros there was an instinct of death. (S. Freud, 1930. Italics added.)

When Freud wrote *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* he was by no means convinced that the new hypothesis was valid. “It may be asked,” he wrote, “whether and how far I am myself convinced of the truth of the hypotheses that have been set out in these pages. My answer would be that I am not convinced myself and that I do not seek to persuade other people to believe in them. Or, more precisely, that I do not know how far I believe in them.” (S. Freud, 1920.) After having tried to construct a new theoretical edifice, one which threatened the validity of many former concepts, and after having done this with a tremendous intellectual effort, this sincerity of Freud’s, which runs so shiningly through his whole work, is particularly impressive. He spent the next eighteen years working on the new theory, and acquired increasingly the sense of conviction he did not yet have in the beginning. Not that he added entirely new aspects to the hypothesis; what he did was, rather, an intellectual “working through” that left him convinced, and must have made it all the more disappointing that not many of his own adherents really understood and shared his views.

The new theory found its first full elaboration in *The Ego and the Id* (1923). Of particular importance is the assumption about the

> special physiological process (of anabolism or catabolism) [which] would be associated with each of the two classes of instincts; both kinds of instinct would be active in every particle of living substance, though in unequal proportions, so that some one substance might be the principal representative of Eros. This hypothesis throws no light whatsoever upon the manner in which the two classes of instincts are fused, blended, and alloyed with each other; but that this takes place regularly and very extensively is an assumption indispensable to our conception. It appears that, as a result of the combination of unicellular organisms into multicellular forms of life, *the death instinct of the single cell* can successfully be neutralized and the *destructive impulses*

> *be diverted* on to the external world through the instrumentality of a special organ. This special organ would seem to be the muscular apparatus; and the death instinct would thus seem to express itself—though probably only in part—as an instinct of destruction directed against the external world and other organisms. (S. Freud, 1923. Italics added.)

In these formulations Freud reveals the new direction of his thinking more explicitly than in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* Instead of the mechanistic physiologic approach of the older theory, which was built on the model of chemically produced tension and the need to reduce this tension to its normal threshold (pleasure principle), the approach of the new theory is a biological one in which each living cell is supposed to be endowed with the two basic qualities of living matter, Eros, and the striving for death; however, the principle of tension reduction is preserved in a more radical form: the reduction of excitation to zero (Nirvana principle).

A year later (1924), in *Economic Problem of Masochism* Freud takes one further step in clarifying the relation between the two instincts. He wrote:

> The libido has the task of making the destroying instinct innocuous, and it fulfils the task by diverting that instinct to a great extent outwards—soon with the help of a special organic system, the muscular apparatus—towards objects in the external world. The instinct is then called the destructive instinct, the instinct for mastery, or the will to power.[8] A portion of the instinct is placed directly in the service of the sexual function, where it has an important part to play. This is sadism proper. Another portion does not share in this transposition outwards; it remains inside the organism and, with the help of the accompanying sexual excitation described above, becomes libidinally bound there. It is in this portion that we have to recognize the original, erotogenic masochism. (S. Freud, 1924.)

In the New Introductory Lecturer (1933) the position taken earlier is maintained: Freud speaks of “the erotic instincts, which seek to combine more and more living substance into ever greater unities, and the death instincts, which oppose this effort and lead what is living back into an

inorganic state." (S. Freud, 1933.) In the same lectures Freud wrote about the original destructive instinct:

> We can only perceive it under two conditions: if it is combined with erotic instincts into masochism or if—with a greater or lesser erotic addition—it is directed against the external world as aggressiveness. And now we are struck by the significance of the possibility that the aggressiveness may not be able to find satisfaction in the external world because it comes up against real obstacles. If this happens, it will perhaps retreat and increase the amount of self-destructiveness holding sway in the interior. We shall hear how this is in fact what occurs and how important a process this is. Impeded aggressiveness seems to involve a grave injury. *It really seems as though it is necessary for us to destroy some other thing or person in order not to destroy ourselves, in order to guard against the impulsion to self-destruction. A sad disclosure indeed for the moralist!* (S. Freud, 1933. Italics added.)

In his last two papers, written, respectively, one and two years before his death, Freud did not make any important alterations in the concepts as he had developed them in the foregoing years. In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (1937) he emphasizes even more the power of the death instinct. As Strachey writes in his editorial notes: "But the most powerful impeding factor of all" he wrote, *"and one totally beyond any possibility of control … is the death instinct."* (S. Freud, 1937. Italics added.) In *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (written in 1938; published in 1940) Freud reaffirms in a systematic way his earlier assumptions without making any relevant changes.

2 Analysis of the Vicissitudes and a Critique of Freud's Theories of the Death Instinct and Eros

The foregoing brief description of Freud's new theories, that of Eros and of the death instinct, cannot show sufficiently how radical the change was from the old to the new theory, or that Freud did not see the radical nature of this change and as a consequence was stuck in many theoretical inconsistencies and immanent contradictions. In the following pages I shall

attempt to describe the significance of the changes and to analyze the conflict between the old and the new theory.

Freud, after the First World War, had two new visions. The first was that of the power and intensity of aggressive-destructive strivings in man, independent of sexuality. Saying that this was a *new* vision is not entirely correct. As I have already shown, he had not been entirely unaware of the existence of aggressive impulses independent of sexuality. But this insight was expressed only sporadically, and it never changed the main hypothesis about the basic polarity between sexual instincts and ego instincts, even though this theory was later modified by the introduction of the concept of narcissism. In the theory of the death instinct the awareness of human destructiveness bursts forth in full strength, and destructiveness becomes the one pole of existence which, fighting with the other pole, Eros, forms the very essence of life. Destructiveness becomes a *primary* phenomenon of life.

The second vision that marks Freud's new theory is not only without antecedents in his former theory, but is in full contradiction to it. It is the vision that Eros, present in every cell of living substance, has as its aim the unification and integration of all cells, and beyond that, the service of civilization, the integration of smaller units into the unity of mankind (Freud, 1930a). Freud discovers nonsexual love. He calls the life instinct also "love instinct"; love is identified with life and growth, and—fighting with the death instinct—it determines human existence. In Freud's older theory man was looked upon as an isolated system, driven by two impulses: one to survive (ego instinct) and one to have pleasure by overcoming the tensions that in turn were chemically produced within the body and localized in the "erogenous zones," of which the genitals were one. In this picture man was primarily isolated, but entered into relations with members of the other sex in order to satisfy his striving for pleasure. The relationship between the two sexes was conceived in a way that resembles human relations in the marketplace. Each is only concerned with the satisfaction of his needs, but it is precisely for the sake of this satisfaction that he has to enter into relations with others who offer what he needs, and need what he offers.

In the Eros theory this is entirely different. Man is no longer conceived of as primarily isolated and egotistical, as *l'homme machine*, but as being primarily related to others, impelled by the life instincts which make him

need union with others. Life, love and growth are one and the same, more deeply rooted and fundamental than sexuality and "pleasure."

The change in Freud's vision shows clearly in his new evaluation of the biblical commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In *Why War?* (1933b) he wrote:

> Anything that encourages the growth of emotional ties between men must operate against war. These ties may be of two kinds. In the first place they may be relations resembling those toward a loved object, though *without having a sexual aim.* There is no need for psychoanalysis to be ashamed to speak of love in this connection, for religion itself uses the same words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This, however, is more easily said than done. The second kind of emotional tie is by means of identification. Whatever leads men to share important interests produces this community of feeling, these identifications. And the structure of human society is to a large extent based on them (p. 212, italics added).

These lines are written by the same man who only three years earlier had ended a comment on this same biblical commandment by asking: "What is the point of a precept enunciated with so much solemnity if its fulfillment *cannot be recommended as reasonable?"* (Freud, 1930a, p. 110, italics added by E. F.)[9]

Nothing short of a radical change of viewpoint had occurred. Freud, the enemy of religion, which he had called an illusion preventing man from reaching maturity and independence, now quotes one of the most fundamental commandments to be found in all great humanistic religions, in support of his psychological assumption. He emphasizes that there is "no need for psychoanalysis to be ashamed to speak of love in this connection" (Freud, 1933b, p. 212)[10], but, indeed, he needs this assertion to overcome the embarrassment he must have felt in making this drastic change with regard to the concept of brotherly love.

Was Freud aware how drastic the change in his approach was? Was he conscious of the profound and irreconcilable contradiction between the old and the new theories? Quite obviously he was not. In *The Ego and the Id* (1923b) he identified Eros (life instinct or love instinct) with the sexual instincts (plus the instinct for self-preservation):

> According to this view we have to distinguish two classes of instincts, one of which, *the sexual instincts or Eros*, is by far the more conspicuous and accessible to study. It comprises not merely the uninhibited sexual instinct proper and the instinctual impulses of an aim-inhibited or sublimated nature derived from it, but also the self-preservative instinct, which must be assigned to the ego and which at the beginning of our analytic work we had good reason for contrasting with the sexual object-instincts (p. 40, italics added).

It is precisely because of his unawareness of the contradiction that he made the attempt to reconcile the old and the new theories in such a way that they seemed to form a continuity without a sharp break. This attempt had to lead to many immanent contradictions and inconsistencies in the new theory, which Freud again and again tried to bridge, smooth over or deny, yet without ever succeeding in doing so. In the following pages I shall attempt to describe the vicissitudes of the new theory produced by Freud's failure to recognize that the new wine—and in this case, I believe, the better wine—could not be put into the old bottles.

Before we start this analysis still another change must be mentioned which, also unrecognized by Freud, complicated matters still more. Freud had built his older theory on a scientific model that is easy to recognize: the mechanistic-materialistic model that had been the scientific ideal of his teacher von Brücke and the entire circle of mechanistic-materialists including Helmholtz and Büchner.[11] They looked on man as a machine driven by chemical processes: feelings, affects and emotions were explained as being caused by specific and identifiable physiological processes. Most of hormonology and of the neurophysiological findings of the last decades were unknown to these men, yet with daring and ingenuity they insisted on the correctness of their approach. Needs and interests for which no somatic sources could be found were ignored, and the understanding of those processes which were not neglected followed the principles of mechanistic thinking. The model of yon Brücke's physiology and Freud's model of man could be repeated today in a properly programmed computer. "He" develops a certain amount of tension which at a certain threshold has to be relieved and reduced, while this realization is checked by another part, the ego, which observes reality and inhibits relief when it conflicts with the needs for survival. This Freudian robot would be similar to Isaac Asimov's

science-fiction robot, but the programming would be different. Its first law would not be not to hurt human beings, but to avoid self-damage or self-destruction.

The new theory does not follow this mechanistic "physiologizing" model. It is centered on a biological orientation in which the fundamental forces of life (and its opposite: death) become the primal forces motivating man. The nature of the cell—that is, of all living substance—becomes the theoretical basis for a theory of motivation, not a physiological process that goes on in certain organs of the body. The new theory was perhaps closer to a vitalistic philosophy[12] than to the concept of the German mechanistic materialists. But, as I already said, Freud was not clearly aware of this change; hence he tries again and again to apply his physiologizing method to the new theory and necessarily has to fail in this attempt to square the circle. However, in one important regard both theories have a common premise which has been the unchanged axiom of Freud's thinking: the concept that the governing law of the psychic apparatus is the tendency to reduce tension (or excitation) to a constant low level (the constancy principle—upon which the pleasure principle rests), or to the zero level (the Nirvana principle, upon which the death instinct is based).

We must now return to a more detailed analysis of Freud's two new visions, that of the death instinct and of the life instinct, as the primal determining forces of human existence.[13]

What motivated Freud to postulate the death instinct?

One factor which I have already mentioned was probably the impact of the First World War. He, like many other men of his time and age, had shared the optimistic vision so characteristic of the European middle class, and saw himself suddenly confronted with a fury of hate and destruction hardly believable before August 1, 1914.

One might speculate that to this historical factor a personal factor could be added. As we know from Ernest Jones's biography, Freud was a man preoccupied with death. He thought of dying every day, after he was forty; he had attacks of *Todesangst* ("fear of death"), and sometimes he would add to his "goodbye": "You might never see me again" (Jones, 1957, p. 301). One might surmise that Freud's severe illness would have impressed him as a confirmation of his fear of death, and thus contributed to the formulation of the death instinct. This speculation, however, is untenable in this simplified form, since the first signs of his illness did not

appear until February 1923, several years after his conception of the death instinct. But it might be not too farfetched to assume that his earlier preoccupation with death grew in intensity as he became sick, and led him to a concept in which the conflict between life and death was at the center of human experience, rather than the conflict between the two life-affirmative drives, sexual desire and ego drives. To assume that man needs to die because death is the hidden goal of his life might be considered a kind of comfort destined to alleviate his fear of death.

While these historical and personal factors constitute one set of motivations for Freud's construction of the death instinct, there is another set of factors which must have inclined him to conceive of this theory. Freud always thought in dualistic terms. He saw opposite forces battling each other, and the life process as the outcome of this battle. Sex and the drive for self-preservation was the original form assumed by the dualistic theory. But with the concept of narcissism which put the self-preservative instinct in the camp of the libido, the old dualism seemed to be threatened. Did the theory of narcissism not impose a monistic theory that all instincts were libidinous? And even worse, would that not justify one of the main heresies of Jung, the concept of libido as denoting *all psychic energy*? Indeed, Freud had to extricate himself from this intolerable dilemma, intolerable because it would have amounted to agreeing with Jung's concept of libido. He had to find a new instinct, opposed to the libido, as the basis for a new dualistic approach. The death instinct fulfilled this requirement. To replace the old dualism, a new one had been found, and existence could be viewed again dualistically as the battlefield of opposing instincts, Eros and the death instinct.

In the case of the new dualism Freud followed a pattern of thinking, about which more will be said later, and constructed two broad concepts into which every phenomenon had to fit. He had done that with the concept of sexuality by enlarging it, so that everything that was not ego instinct belonged to the sexual instinct. He followed the same method again with the death instinct. He made it so broad that as a result every striving which was not subsumed under Eros belonged to the death instinct, and vice versa. In this way aggressiveness, destructiveness, sadism, the drive for control and mastery were, in spite of their qualitative differences, manifestations of the same force—the death instinct.

In still another aspect Freud followed the same pattern of thinking that had had such a strong hold over him in the earlier phase of his theoretical system. About the death instinct he says that it is originally all inside; then part of it is sent outwards and acts as aggressiveness, while part of it remains in the interior as primary masochism. But when the part that is sent outwards meets with obstacles too great to overcome, the death instinct is redirected inward and manifests itself as secondary masochism. This pattern of reasoning is exactly the same as that employed by Freud in his discussion of narcissism. At first all libido is in the ego (primary narcissism), then it is extended outward to objects (object libido), but it is often directed again to the interior and then forms the so-called secondary narcissism.

Many times "death instinct" is used synonymously with "instinct of destruction" and "aggressive instincts."[14] But at the same time, Freud makes fine distinctions between these different terms. By and large, as James Strachey has pointed out in his introduction to *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Freud, 1930a), in Freud's later writings—for instance *Civilization and Its Discontents, The Ego and the Id* (1923b), *New Introductory Lectures* (1933a), *An Outline* of *Psychoanalysis* (1940a) the aggressive instinct is something secondary, derived from the primary self-destruction.

Here are some examples of this relationship between the death instinct and aggressiveness. In *Civilization and Its Discontents* Freud writes that the death instinct is "diverted towards the external world and comes to light as an instinct of aggressiveness and destructiveness" (Freud, 1930a, p. 118). In the *New Introductory Lectures* he speaks of "self-destructiveness *as an expression* of a 'death instinct' which cannot fail to be present in every vital process" (Freud, 1933a, p. 107, italics added). In the same work Freud makes this thought still more explicit: "We are led to the view that masochism is older than sadism, and that sadism is the destructive instinct directed outwards, thus acquiring the characteristic of aggressiveness" (p. 105). The amount of destructive instinct which remains in the interior either combines "with erotic instincts into masochism or—with a greater or lesser erotic addition—it is directed against the external world as aggressiveness." But, so continues Freud, if the aggressiveness directed outward meets with obstacles that are too strong it returns and increases the amount of self-destructiveness holding sway in the interior (ibid.). The end of this theoretical and somewhat contradictory development is reached in Freud's

last two papers. In the *Outline* he says that within the id "the organic *instincts* operate which are themselves compounded of fusions of *two primal forces* (Eros and Destructiveness) in varying proportions…" (Freud, 1940a, p. 198, italics added). In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* Freud also speaks of the death instinct and Eros as two "primal instincts" (Freud, 1937c).

It is amazing and impressive how firmly Freud stuck to his concept of the death instinct, in spite of great theoretical difficulties that he tried hard —and in my opinion, vainly—to overcome.

The main difficulty perhaps lies in the assumption of the identity of two tendencies, that of the body's tendency to return to the original, inorganic state (as an outcome of the principle of repetition compulsion) and that of the instinct to destroy, either oneself or others. For the first tendency the term *thanatos*, referring to death, may be adequate, or even "Nirvana principle," indicating the tendency to the reduction of *tension*, of energy, to the point of the end of all energetic strivings.[15] But is this slow decrease of life force the same as destructiveness? Of course, logically it could be argued—and Freud implicitly does so—that if a tendency toward dying is inherent in the organism, there must be an active force that tends to destroy. (This is really the same kind of thinking that we find among the instinctivists who postulate a special instinct behind every kind of behavior.) But if we go beyond such circular reasoning, is there any evidence or even reason for this identity of the tendency toward cessation of all excitation and the impulse to destroy? It hardly seems so. If we assume, following Freud's reasoning on the basis of the repetition compulsion, that life has an inherent tendency toward slowing down and eventually dying, such a biologically innate tendency would be quite different from the active impulse to destroy. If we add that this same tendency to die is also supposed to be the source of the passion for power and the instinct for mastery, and—when mixed with sexuality—the source of sadism[16] and masochism, the theoretical *tour de force* must end in failure. The "Nirvana principle" and the passion for destruction are two disparate entities that cannot be brought under the same category of death instinct(s).

A further difficulty lies in the fact that the death "instinct" does not fit Freud's general concept of instincts. First of all it does not have, as do the instincts in Freud's earlier theory, a special zone in the body from which it

originates, rather it is a biological force inherent in all living substance. This point has been made convincingly by Otto Fenichel:

> Dissimulation in the cells…—that is to say an objective destruction—cannot be the source of a destructive instinct in the same sense that a chemically determined sensitization of the central organ through stimulation of the erotogenetic zones is the source of the sexual instinct. For according to the definition, instinct aims at *eliminating* the somatic change which we designate as the source of the instinct: but the death instinct does not aim at eliminating dissimulation. For this reason it does not seem to me possible to set up the "death instinct" as one species of instinct over against another species (Fenichel, 1945, p. 60f.).

Fenichel points here to one of the theoretical difficulties Freud created for himself, even though, as we may say, he repressed the awareness of it. This difficulty is all the more serious since Freud, as I shall show later, had to come to the conclusion that Eros does not fulfill the theoretical conditions of an instinct either. Certainly, had Freud not had strong personal motivations, he would not have used the term *instinct* in a completely different sense from the original one without pointing out this difference himself. (This difficulty makes itself felt even in the terminology. Eros cannot be used together with "instinct" and logically Freud never talked about an "eros instinct." But he made a place for the term *instinct* by using "life instinct" alternatively with Eros.)

Actually, the death instinct has no connection with Freud's earlier theory, except in the general axiom of drive reduction. As we have seen, in the earlier theory aggression was either a component drive of pregenital sexuality or an ego drive directed against stimuli from the outside. In the theory of the death instinct no connection is made with the former sources of aggression, except that the death instinct, when mixed with sexuality, is now used to explain sadism (Freud, 1933a, p. 104f.).[17]

To sum up, the concept of the death instinct was determined by two main requisites: first, by the need to accommodate Freud's new conviction of the power of human aggression; second, by the need to stick to a dualistic concept of instincts. After the ego instincts had also been considered to be libidinous, Freud had to find a new dichotomy, and the one

between Eros and the death instinct offered itself as the most convenient one. But while convenient from the standpoint of immediately solving a problem, it was very inconvenient from the standpoint of the development of Freud's whole theory of instinctual motivation. The death instinct became a "catchall" concept, by the use of which one tried without success to resolve incompatible contradictions. Freud, perhaps due to his age and illness, did not approach the problem squarely and thus patched up the contradictions. Most of the psychoanalysts who did not accept his concept of Eros and death instinct found an easy solution; they transformed the death instinct into a "destructive instinct" opposite of the old sexual instinct. They thus combined their loyalty to Freud with their inability to go beyond the old-fashioned instinct theory. Even considering the difficulties of the new theory, it constituted a considerable achievement: it recognized as the basic conflict of human existence the choice between life and death, and it relinquished the old physiological concept of drives for a more profound biological speculation. Freud did not have the satisfaction of finding a solution, and he had to leave his instinct theory as a torso. The further development of his theory must face the problem and deal squarely with the difficulties, hoping to find new solutions.

In discussing the theory of the *life instinct* and of Eros, we find that the theoretical difficulties are, if anything, even more serious than those connected with the concept of the death instinct. The reason for the difficulties is obvious. In the libido theory the excitation was due to the chemically determined sensitization, through the stimulation of the various erotogenic zones. In the case of the life instinct we are dealing with a tendency, characteristic of all living substance, of which there is no specific physiological source or specific organ. How could the old sexual instinct and the new life instinct—how could sexuality and Eros—be the same?

Yet, although Freud wrote in the *New Introductory Lectures* that the new theory had "replaced" the libido theory, he affirmed in the same lectures and elsewhere that the sexual instincts and Eros are identical. He wrote: "Our hypothesis is that there are two essentially different classes of instincts: the sexual instincts, understood in the widest sense—Eros, if you prefer that name—and the aggressive instincts, whose aim is destruction" (Freud, 1933a, p. 103). Or, in *An Outline of Psychoanalysis:* "The total available energy of Eros … henceforth we shall speak of as 'libido'" (Freud, 1940a, p. 150). Sometimes he identifies Eros with the sexual

instinct *and* the instinct for self-preservation (Freud, 1923b), which was only logical after he had revised the original theory and classified both the original enemies, the self-preservative and the sexual instincts, as being libidinous. But while Freud sometimes equates Eros and libido, he expresses a slightly different viewpoint in his last work, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis.* Here he writes: “The greater part of what we know about Eros—that is to say, about its exponent, the libido—has been gained from a study of the sexual function, which, indeed, on the prevailing view, *even if not according to our theory,* coincides with Eros” (Freud, 1940a, p. 151, italics added). According to this statement, and in contradiction to those quoted before, Eros and sexuality do *not* coincide. It seems that what Freud has in mind here is that Eros is a “primal instinct” (aside from the death instinct), of which the sexual instinct is *one exponent.* In fact, he returns here to a view expressed already in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* where he says in a footnote that the sexual instinct “was transformed for us into Eros, which seeks to force together and hold together the portions of living substance. ‘That are commonly called the sexual instincts are looked upon by us as the part of Eros which is directed towards objects” (Freud, 1920g, p. 61).

Once Freud even makes the attempt to indicate that his original concept of sexuality “was by no means identical with the impulsion towards a union of the two sexes or towards producing a pleasurable sensation in the genitals; it had far more resemblance to the all-inclusive and all-preserving Eros of Plato’s Symposium” (Freud, 1925e, p. 218). The truth of the first part of this statement is obvious. Freud had always defined sexuality as broader than genital sexuality. But it is difficult to see on what basis he maintains that his older concept of sexuality resembled that of the Platonic Eros.

The older sexual theory was precisely the opposite of the Platonic theory. The libido was male according to Freud, and there was no corresponding female libido. The woman, in line with Freud’s extreme patriarchal bias, was not man’s equal but a crippled, castrated male. The very essence of the Platonic myth is that male and female were once one and were then divided into halves, which implies, of course, that the two halves are equals, that they form a polarity endowed with the tendency to unite again.

The only reason for Freud's attempt to interpret the old libido theory in the light of Plato's Eros must have been his wish to deny the discontinuity of the two phases, even at the expense of an obvious distortion of his older theory.

As in the case of the death instinct, Freud ran into a difficulty with regard to the instinctual nature of the life instinct. As Fenichel (1945) has pointed out, the death instinct cannot be called an "instinct" in terms of Freud's *new* concept of instinct, developed first in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and continued throughout his later work, including the *Outline of Psychoanalysis.* Freud wrote: "Though they [the instincts] are the ultimate cause of all activity, they are of a conservative nature; the state whatever it may be, which an organism has reached, gives rise to a tendency to reestablish that state as soon as it has been abandoned" (Freud, 1940a, p. 148).

Have Eros and the life instinct this conservative quality of all instincts, and thus can they be properly called an instinct? Freud was trying hard to find a solution that would save the conservative character of the life instincts.

In speaking of the germ cells that "work against the death of the living substance and succeed in winning for it what we can only regard as potential immortality" (Freud, 1920g, p. 40), he stated:

> The instincts which watch over the destinies of these elementary organisms that survive the whole individual, which provide them with a safe shelter while they are defenseless against the stimuli of the external world, which bring about their meeting with other germ cells, and so on—these constitute the group of the sexual instincts. They are conservative in the same sense as the other instincts in that they bring back earlier states of living substance; but they are conservative to a higher degree in that they are peculiarly resistant to external influences; and they are conservative too in another sense in that they preserve life itself for a comparatively long period. They are the true life instincts. They operate against the purpose of the other instincts, which leads, by reason of their function, to death; and this fact indicates that there is an opposition between them and the other instincts, an opposition whose importance was long ago recognized by the theory of the neuroses. It is as though the life of the organism

> moved with a vacillating rhythm. One group of instincts rushes forward so as to reach the final aim of life as swiftly as possible; but when a particular stage in the advance has been reached, the other group jerks back to a certain point to make a fresh start and so prolong the journey. And even though it is certain that sexuality *and the distinction between the sexes did not exist when life began*, the possibility remains that the instincts which were later to be described as sexual may have been in operation from the very first, and it may not be true that it was only at a later time that they started upon their work of opposing the activities of the "ego instincts" (Freud, 19208, p. 41, italics added by E. F.).

What is most interesting in this passage, and the reason I quote it at length, is how almost desperately Freud tried to save the conservative concept of all instincts and hence also of the life instinct. He had to take refuge in a new formulation of the sexual instinct as one that watches over the destinies of the germ cell, a definition different from his whole concept of instinct in his previous work.

A few years later, in *The Ego and the Id* Freud made the attempt to give Eros the status of a true instinct, by ascribing to it a conservative nature. He wrote:

> On the basis of theoretical considerations, supported by biology, we put forward the hypothesis of a death instinct, the task of which is to lead organic life back into the inanimate state; on the other hand, we supposed that Eros, by bringing about a more and more far-reaching combination of the particles into which living substance is dispersed, aims at complicating life and at the same time, of course, at preserving it. Acting in this way, both the instincts would be conservative in the strictest sense of the word, since both would be endeavouring to re-establish a state of things that was disturbed by the emergence of life. The emergence of life would thus be the cause of the continuance of life and also at the same time of the striving towards death; and life itself would be a conflict and compromise between these two trends. The problem of the origin of life would remain a cosmological one; and the problem of the goal and purpose of life would be answered dualistically (Freud, 1923b, p. 40).

Eros aims at complicating life and preserving it, and hence is also conservative, because with the emergence of life an instinct is born which is to preserve it. But, we must ask, if it is the nature of the instinct to re-establish the earliest state of existence, inorganic matter, how can it at the same time tend to re-establish a later form of existence, namely life?

After these futile attempts to save the conservative character of the life instinct, Freud, in the *Outline*, finally arrives at a negative solution: "In the case of Eros (and the love instinct) we can*not* apply this formula [of the conservative character of the instincts]. To do so would presuppose that living substance was once a unity which had later been torn apart and was now striving towards re-union" (Freud, 1940a, p. 149, italics added). Freud adds here a significant footnote: "Certain writers have imagined something of the sort, but nothing like it is known to us from the actual history of living substance" (ibid.). Quite obviously Freud refers here to Plato's Eros myth, yet he objects to it as a product of poetic imagination. This rejection is truly puzzling. The Platonic answer would indeed satisfy the theoretical requirement of the conservative nature of Eros. What could be more fitting to accommodate the formula that the instinct tends to restore an earlier situation than that male and female were unified in the beginning, then separated, and were driven by the wish for reunion? Why did Freud not accept this way out and thus rid himself of the theoretical embarrassment that Eros was not a true instinct?

Perhaps some more light is thrown on this question if we compare this footnote in the *Outline* with a much more detailed and earlier statement in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Here he quoted Plato's report in the Symposium concerning the original unity of man who was then divided into halves by Zeus, and after this division, each desiring his other half, they came together and threw their arms about one another eager to grow into one. He wrote:

> Shall we follow the hint given us by the poet-philosopher, and venture upon the hypothesis that living substance at the same time of its coming to life was torn apart into small particles, which have ever since endeavoured to reunite through the sexual instincts? That these instincts, in which the chemical affinity of inanimate matter persisted, gradually succeeded, as they developed through the kingdom of the protista, in overcoming the difficulties put in the way of that endeavour

> by an environment charged with dangerous stimuli—stimuli which compelled them to form a protective cortical layer? That these splintered fragments of living substance in this way attained a multicellular condition and finally transferred the instinct for reuniting, in the most highly concentrated form, to the germ cells?—But here, I think, the moment has come for breaking off" (Freud, 1920g, p. 58).[18]

We easily see the difference between the two statements: in the earlier formulation *(Beyond the Pleasure Principle)* Freud leaves the answer open, while in the later statement *(An Outline of Psychoanal*ysis) the answer is definitely negative.

But much more important is the particular formulation that is common to both statements. Both times he speaks of "living substance" having been torn apart. The Platonic myth, however, does not speak of "living substance" having been torn apart, but of *male* and *female* having been torn apart and striving to be reunited. Why did Freud insist on "living substance" as the crucial point?

I believe the answer may lie in a subjective factor. Freud was deeply imbued with the patriarchal feeling that men were superior to women, and not their equals. Hence the theory of a male-female polarity—which like all polarity implies difference *and* equality—was unacceptable to him. This emotional male bias had, at a much earlier period, led him to the theory that women are crippled men, governed by the castration complex and penis envy, inferior to men also by the fact that their superego is weaker, their narcissism, however, stronger than that of men. While one can admire the brilliance of his construction, it is hard to deny that the assumption that one-half of the human race is a crippled version of the other half is nothing short of an absurdity, only explainable by the depth of sex prejudice (not too different from racial prejudice and/or religious prejudice). Is it surprising, then, that Freud was blocked here, too, when by following Plato's myth he would have been forced into an assumption of male-female equality? Indeed, Freud could not take this step; thus he changed male-female union to union of "living substance" and rejected the logical way out of the difficulty that Eros did not partake in the conservative nature of instincts.

I have dwelt so long on this point for several reasons. First of all, because it helps to understand the immanent contradictions in Freud's theory if we know the motivations that compelled him to arrive at these

contradictory solutions. Second, because the problem discussed here is interesting beyond the special problem of the vicissitudes of Freud's instinct theory. We try here to understand Freud's conscious thought as a compromise between the new vision and older thought habits rooted in his "patriarchal complex," which prevented him from expressing his new vision in a clear and unambiguous way. In other words, Freud was the prisoner of the feelings and thought habits of his society, which he was unable to transcend.[19] When a new vision struck him, only part of it—or its consequences—became conscious, while another part remained unconscious because it was incompatible with his "complex" and previous conscious thought. His conscious thinking had to try to deny the contradictions and inconsistencies by making constructions that were sufficiently plausible to satisfy conscious thought processes.[20]

Freud did not and—as I have tried to show—could not choose the solution of making Eros fit his own definition of instincts—that is, fit their conservative nature. Was there another theoretical option open to him? I believe there was. He could have found another solution to accommodate his new vision, the dominant role of love and of destructiveness, within his old traditional libido theory. He could have set up a polarity between *pregenital sexuality* (oral and anal sadism) as the source of destructiveness and genital sexuality as the source of love.[21] But of course this solution was difficult for Freud to accept for a reason mentioned before in another context. It would have come dangerously close to a monistic view, because both destructiveness *and* love would have been libidinous. Yet, Freud had already laid the basis for connecting destructiveness with pregenital sexuality by arriving at the conclusion that the destructive part of the anal-sadistic libido is the death instinct (Freud, 1923b, 1920g). If that is so, it seems fair to speculate that the anal libido itself must have a deep affinity to the death instinct; in fact the further conclusion might seem warranted that it is of the essence of the anal libido to aim for destruction.

But Freud does not come to this conclusion, and it is interesting to speculate why he did not.

The first reason lies in too narrow an interpretation of the anal libido. For Freud and his pupils the essential aspect of anality lies in the tendency to control and possess (aside from a friendly aspect of retaining). Now, controlling and possessing are certainly tendencies opposite of loving, furthering, liberating, which form a syndrome among themselves. But

“possession” and “control” do not contain the very, essence of destructiveness, the wish to destroy, and hostility toward life. No doubt, the anal character has a deep interest in and affinity to feces as part of their general affinity to all that is not alive. Feces are the product finally eliminated by the body, being of no further use to it. The anal character is attracted by feces as he is attracted by everything that is useless for life, such as dirt, death, decay.[22] We can say that the tendency to control and possess is only one aspect of the anal character, but milder and less malignant than hatred of life. I believe that had Freud seen this direct connection between feces and death he might have arrived at the conclusion that the main polarity is that between the genital and the anal orientations, two clinically well-studied entities that are the equivalents of Eros and of the death instinct. Had he done so, Eros and the death instinct would not have appeared as two biologically given and equally strong tendencies, but Eros would have been looked upon as the biologically normal aim of development, while the death instinct would have been seen to be based on a failure of normal development and in this sense a pathological, though deeply rooted, striving. If one wants to entertain a biological speculation one might relate anality to the fact that orientation by smell is characteristic of all four-legged mammals, and that the erect posture implies the change from orientation by smell to orientation by sight. The change in function of the old olfactory brain would correspond to the same transformation of orientation. In view of this, one might consider that the anal character constitutes a regressive phase of biological development for which there might even be a constitutional-genetic basis. The anality of the infant could be considered as representing an evolutionary repetition of a biologically earlier phase in the process of transition to fully developed human functioning. (In Freud’s terms, anality-destructiveness would have the conservative nature of an instinct, i.e., the return from genitality-love-sight orientation to anality-destruction-smell orientation.)

The relationship between death instinct and life instinct would have been essentially the same as that between pregenital and genital libido in Freud’s developmental scheme. The libido fixation on the anal level would have been a pathological phenomenon, but one with deep roots in the psychosexual constitution, while the genital level would be characteristic of the healthy individual. In this speculation, then, the anal level would have two rather different aspects: one, the drive to control; the other, the drive to

destroy. As I have attempted to show, this would be the difference between sadism and necrophilia.

But Freud did not make this connection, and perhaps could not make it for the reasons that have been discussed earlier in connection with the difficulties in the theory of Eros.

3 The Power and Limitations of the Death Instinct

In the previous pages I have pointed to the immanent contradictions into which Freud was forced when he changed from the libido theory to the Eros-death-instinct theory. There is another conflict of a different kind in the latter theory which must attract our attention: the conflict between Freud the theoretician and Freud the humanist. The theoretician arrives at the conclusion that man has only the alternative between destroying himself (slowly, by illness) or destroying others; or—putting it in other words—between causing suffering either to himself or to others. The humanist rebels against the idea of this tragic alternative that would make war a rational solution of this aspect of human existence.

Not that Freud was averse to tragic alternatives. On the contrary, in his earlier theory he had constructed such a tragic alternative: repression of instinctual demands (especially pregenital ones) was supposed to be the basis of the development of civilization: the repressed instinctual drive was "sublimated" into valuable cultural channels, but still at the expense of full human happiness. On the other hand, repression led not only to increasing civilization but also to the development of neurosis among the many in whom the repressive process did not work successfully. Lack of civilization combined with full happiness or civilization combined with neurosis and diminished happiness seemed to be the alternative.[23],[24]

The contradiction between the death instinct and Eros confronts man with a real and truly tragic alternative, a real alternative because he can decide to attack and wage war, to be aggressive, and to express his hostility because he prefers to do this rather than to be sick. That this alternative is a tragic one hardly needs to be proven, at least not as far as Freud or any other humanist is concerned.

Freud makes no attempt to befog the issue by blurring the sharpness of the conflict. As quoted earlier, in the *New Introductory Lectures* he wrote:

> “And now we are struck by the significance of the possibility that the aggressiveness may not be able to find satisfaction in the external world because it comes up against real obstacles. If this happens, it will perhaps retreat and increase the amount of self-destructiveness holding sway in the interior. We shall hear how this is in fact what occurs and how important a process this is” (Freud, 1933a, p. 105).

In *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* he wrote: “Holding back aggressiveness is in general unhealthy and leads to illness” (Freud, 1940a, p. 150). After having thus drawn the lines sharply, how does Freud respond to the impulse not to view human affairs so hopelessly and to avoid siding with those who recommend war as the best medicine for the human race?

Indeed, Freud made several theoretical attempts to find a way out of the dilemma between the theoretician and the humanist. One attempt lay in the idea that the destructive instinct can be transformed into conscience. In *Civilization and Its Discontents* Freud asks: “What happens to him [the aggressor] to render his desire for aggression innocuous?” Freud answers thus:

> Something very remarkable, which we should never have guessed and which is nevertheless quite obvious. His aggressiveness is introjected, internalized; it is, in point of fact, sent back to where it came from—that is, it is directed towards his own ego. There it is taken over by a portion of the ego which sets itself over against the rest of the ego as super-ego, and which now, in the form of “conscience,” is ready to put into action against the ego the same harsh aggressiveness that the ego would have liked to satisfy upon other, extraneous individuals. The tension between the harsh superego and the ego that is subjected to it, is called by us the sense of guilt; it expresses itself as a need for punishment. Civilization, therefore, obtains mastery over the individual’s dangerous desire for aggression by weakening and disarming it and by setting up an agency within him to watch over it, like a garrison in a conquered city (Freud, 1930a, p. 123f.).[25]

The transformation of destructiveness into a self-punishing conscience does not seem to be as much of an advantage as Freud implies. According to his theory conscience would have to be as cruel as the death instinct, since it is

charged with its energies, and no reason is given why the death instinct should be “weakened” and “disarmed.” Rather, it would seem that the following analogy expresses the real consequences of Freud’s thought more logically: a city that has been ruled by a cruel enemy defeats him with the help of a dictator who then sets up a system that is just as cruel as that of the defeated enemy; and thus, what is gained?

However, this theory of the strict conscience as a manifestation of the death instinct is not the only attempt Freud makes to mitigate his concept of a tragic alternative. Another less tragic explanation is expressed in the following: “The instinct of destruction, moderated and tamed, and, as it were, inhibited in its aim, must, when it is directed towards objects, provide the ego with the satisfaction of its vital needs and with control over nature” (Freud, 1930a, p. 121). This seems to be a good example of “sublimation”;[26] the aim of the instinct is not weakened, but it is directed toward other socially valuable aims, in this case the “control over nature.”

This sounds, indeed, like a perfect solution. Man is freed from the tragic choice of destroying either others or himself, because the energy of the destructive instinct is used for the control over nature. But, we must ask, can this really be so? Can it be true that destructiveness becomes transformed into constructiveness? What can “control over nature” mean? Taming and breeding animals, gathering and cultivating plants, weaving cloth, building huts, manufacturing pottery and many more activities including the construction of machines, railroads, airplanes, skyscrapers: all these are acts of constructing, building, unifying, synthesizing, and, indeed, if one wanted to attribute them to one of the two basic instincts, they might be considered as being motivated by Eros rather than by the death instinct. With the possible exception of killing animals for their consumption and killing men in war, both of which could be considered as rooted in destructiveness, material production is not destructive but constructive.

Freud makes one other attempt to soften the harshness of his alternatives in his answer to Albert Einstein’s letter on the topic *Why War?* Not even on this occasion, when confronted with the question of the psychological causes of war as posed by one of the greatest scientists and humanists of the century, did Freud try to hide or mitigate the harshness of his previous alternatives. With the fullest clarity he wrote:

> As a result of a little speculation, we have come to suppose that this instinct is at work in every living creature and is striving to bring it to ruin and to reduce life to its original condition of inanimate matter. Thus it quite seriously deserves to be called a death instinct, while the erotic instincts represent the effort to live. The death instinct turns into the destructive instinct when, with (fie help of' special organs, it is directed outwards, on to objects. The organism preserves its own life, so to say, by destroying an extraneous one. Some portion of the death instinct, however, remains operative *within* the organism, and we have sought to trace quite a number of normal and pathological phenomena to this internalization of the destructive instinct. We have even been guilty of the heresy of attributing the origin of conscience to this diversion inwards of aggressiveness. You will notice that it is by no means a trivial matter if this process is carried too far; it is positively unhealthy. On the other hand if these forces are turned to destruction in the external world, the organism will be relieved and the effect must be beneficial. *This would serve as a biological justification for all the ugly and dangerous impulses against which we are struggling. It must be admitted that they stand nearer to Nature than does our resistance to them for which an explanation also needs to be found.* (Freud, 1933a), p. 211, italics added).

After having made this very clear and uncompromising statement summing up his previously expressed views about the death instinct, and after having stated that he could hardly believe the stories about those happy regions where there are races "who know neither coercion nor aggression," Freud tried toward the end of the letter to arrive at a less pessimistic solution than the beginning seemed to foreshadow. His hope was founded on several possibilities: "If willingness to engage in war," he wrote, "is an effect of the destructive instinct, the most obvious plan will be to bring Eros, its antagonist, into play against it. Anything that encourages the growth of emotional ties between men must operate against war" (p. 212).

It is remarkable and moving how Freud the humanist and, as he calls himself, "pacifist," tries here almost frantically to evade the logical consequences of his own premises. If the death instinct is as powerful and fundamental as Freud claims throughout, how can it be considerably

reduced by bringing Eros into play, considering that they are both contained in every, cell and that they constitute an irreducible quality of living matter?

Freud's second argument in favor of peace is even more fundamental. At the end of his letter to Einstein he writes:

> Now war is in the crassest opposition to the psychical attitude imposed on us by the process of civilization, and for that reason we are bound to rebel against it: we simply cannot any longer put up with it. This is not merely an intellectual and emotional repudiation; we pacifists have a *constitutional* intolerance of war, an idiosyncrasy magnified, as it were, to the highest degree. It seems, indeed, as though the lowering of aesthetic standards in war plays a scarcely smaller part in our rebellion than do its cruelties. And how long shall we have to wait before the rest of mankind become pacifists too, There is no telling (p. 215).

And at the end of this letter Freud touches upon a thought found occasionally in his work,[27] *that of the process of civilization as a factor leading to a lasting, as it were, a "constitutional," "organic" repression of instincts (ibid.).*

Freud had already expressed this view much earlier, in the *Three Essays,* when he spoke of the sharp conflict between instinct and civilization: "One gets an impression from civilized children that the construction of these dams is a product of education, and no doubt, education has much to do with it. But in reality *this development is organically determined* and fixed by heredity, and it can occasionally occur without any help at all from education" (Freud, 1905d, p. 178, italics added).

In *Civilization and Its Discontents* Freud continued this line of thinking by speaking of an "organic repression," for instance in the case of the taboo related to menstruation or anal erotism, thus paving the way to civilization. We find, even as early as 1897, Freud saying, in a letter to Fliess (November 14, 1897), that "something organic played a part in repression" (Freud, 1897, letter 75).[28]

The various statements quoted here show that Freud's reliance on a "constitutional" intolerance to war was not only an attempt to transcend the tragic perspective of his death-instinct concept produced *ad hoc,* as it were, by his discussion with Einstein, but was in accordance with a line of

thinking that, although never dominant, had been in the background of his thoughts since 1897.

If Freud's assumptions were right that civilization produces "constitutional" and hereditary repressions—that in the process of civilization certain instinctual needs are in fact weakened—then indeed he would have found a way out of the dilemma. Then civilized man would not be prompted by certain instinctual demands contrary to civilization to the same degree as primitive man. The impulse to destroy would not have the same intensity and power in civilized man as it would have in primitive man. This line of thinking would also lead to the speculation that certain inhibitions against killing might have been built up during the process of civilization and become hereditarily fixed. However, even if one could discover such hereditary factors in general, it would be exceedingly difficult to assume their existence in the case of the death instinct.

According to Freud's concept the death instinct is a tendency inherent in all living substance; it seems to be a theoretically difficult proposition to assume that this fundamental biological force could be weakened in the course of civilization. With the same logic one could assume that Eros could be constitutionally weakened, and such assumptions would lead to the more general assumption that the very nature of living substance could be altered by the process of civilization, by means of an "organic "repression.[29]

However this may be, today it would seem to be one of the most important subjects for research to try to establish the facts with regard to this point. Is there sufficient evidence to show that there has been a constitutional, organic repression of certain instinctual demands in the course of civilization? Is this repression one that is different from repression in Freud's usual sense, inasmuch as it weakens the instinctual demand, rather than removing it from consciousness or diverting it to other aims? And more specifically, in the course of history have man's destructive impulses become weaker, or have inhibitory impulses developed that are now hereditarily fixed? To answer this question would require extended studies, especially in anthropology, sociopsychology and genetics. Looking back at the various attempts Freud made to mitigate the sharpness of his fundamental alternative—destruction of others or of oneself—one can only admire his persistence in trying to find a way out of the dilemma and, at the same time, his honesty in having refrained from believing that he had found

a satisfactory solution. Thus, in the Outline he no longer makes reference to the factors limiting the power of destructiveness (except the role of the superego) and concludes this topic by saying: “This is one of the dangers to health by which human beings are faced on their path to cultural development. Holding back aggressiveness is in general unhealthy and leads to illness (to mortification).” (S. Freud, 1938.)[30]

4 Critique of the Substance of the Theory

We must proceed now from the immanent critique of Freud’s theory of the death and life instincts to a critique of the substance of his argument. Since a great deal has been written about this I need not enter into a discussion of all the points of such a critique. I shall mention only those of particular interest from my own point of view, or which have not been adequately dealt with by other writers.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of Freud’s assumption lies both here and with regard to some other problems in the fact that the theoretician and system builder in him ran ahead of the clinical observer. Furthermore Freud was guided one-sidedly by *intellectual* imagination rather than by *experimental* imagination; had this not been so, he would have sensed that-sadism, aggressiveness, destructiveness, mastery, and will for power are qualitatively entirely different phenomena, even though the borderline may not always be clearly demarcated. But Freud thought in abstract theoretical terms which implied that all that was not love was death instinct, since every tendency had to be subsumed under the new duality. The result of putting different and partly contradictory psychical tendencies into one category leads necessarily to the result that one understands none of them; one is forced to speak in an alienated language about phenomena of which one can speak meaningfully only if one’s words refer to different, specific forms of experience.

Yet it is a testimony to Freud’s capacity to transcend at times his commitment to a dualistic instinct theory that we find that he did see some essential differences in quality between various forms of aggressiveness, even though he did not differentiate them by different terms. Here are the three main forms he saw:

1. Impulses of cruelty, independent of sexuality, based on the self-preservative instincts; their aim is to realize realistic dangers and to defend

themselves against attack. (Freud, 1905.) The function of this aggression is survival, i.e., defense against threats to vital interests. This type would correspond roughly with what I have called “defensive aggression.”

2. In his concept of sadism Freud saw one form of destructiveness for which the act of destroying, forcing, torturing, is lustful (although he explained the particular quality of this form of destructiveness as an alloy of sexual lust and nonsexual death instinct). This type would correspond to “sadism.”

3. Eventually, Freud recognized a third type of destructiveness that he described as follows: “But even where it emerges without any sexual purpose, in the blindest fury of destructiveness, we cannot fail to recognize that the satisfaction of the instinct is accompanied by an extraordinarily high degree of narcissistic enjoyment, owing to its presenting the ego with a fulfillment of the latter’s old wishes for omnipotence.”

It is not easy to say which phenomenon Freud refers to here. Pure destructiveness of the necrophilous person, or the extreme form of the power-drunk, sadistic member of a lynching or raping mob. Perhaps the difficulty lies in the general problem of differentiating between extreme forms of sadistic, omnipotent rage and pure necrophilia, a difficulty I have commented on in the text. But whatever the answer is, the fact remains that Freud recognized different phenomena, yet gave up this differentiation when he had to make the clinical facts fit his theoretical requirements.

Where are we left after this analysis of Freud’s theory of the death instinct? Is it essentially different from the construct of a “destructive instinct,” that many psychoanalysts make, or from Freud’s earlier construct, that of the libido? We have in the course of this discussion pointed out subtle changes and contradictions in Freud’s development of the theory of aggression. We have seen, in the answer to Einstein, that Freud for a moment indulged in speculations that tended to make his position less harsh and less apt to be used as a justification of war. But when we look over Freud’s theoretical edifice once more, it becomes clear that in spite of all this, the basic character of the death instinct follows in a certain way the logic of the hydraulic model that Freud had originally applied to the sexual instinct. A striving for death is constantly generated in all living substance, leaving only one alternative: either to do the silent work of man’s destruction from within, or to turn toward the outside as “destructiveness” and to save man from self-destruction by the destruction of others. As Freud

put it: “Holding back aggressiveness is in general unhealthy and leads to illness (to mortification).” (S. Freud, 1938.)

Summing up his examination of Freud’s theory of life and death instinct, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Freud, since 1920, got entangled in two basically different concepts and in two distinct approaches to the problem of human motivation. The first, the conflict between self-preservation and sexuality, was the traditional concept, reason versus passion, duty versus natural inclination, or hunger versus love, as the driving forces in man. The later theory, based on the conflict between the inclination to live and the one to die, between integration and disintegration, between love and hate, was entirely different. While one may say that it was based on the popular concept of love and hate as the two forces driving man, it was in fact more profound and original; it followed the Platonic tradition of Eros and considered love as the energy that binds all living substance together and is the guarantor of life. More specifically even, it seems to follow Empedocles’ idea that the world of living creatures can exist only as long as the struggle between the contrary forces of Strife and Aphrodite, or love, the power of attraction and repulsion are active together.[31]

5 The Principle of Excitation Reduction: the Basis for the Pleasure Principle and Death Instinct

The differences between Freud’s old and new theories, however, must not make one forget that there was one axiom, deeply fixed in Freud’s mind since he studied with von Brucke, that is common to both theories. This axiom is the “principle of tension reduction” underlying Freud’s thinking from 1888 to his last discussion of the death instinct.

Already at the very beginning of his work in 1888 Freud spoke of a “stable amount of excitation.” (S. Freud, 1888.) He formulated the principle more explicitly in 1892 when he wrote: “*The nervous system endeavours to keep constant something in its functional relations that we may describe as the ‘sum of excitation.’ It puts this precondition of health into effect by disposing associatively of every sensible accretion of excitation (Erregungszuwachs) or by discharging it by an appropriate motor reaction.*” (S. Freud, 1892. Italics added.)

Correspondingly Freud defined a psychical trauma, as he employed it in his theory of hysteria, as: “Any impression which the nervous system has difficulty in disposing of by means of associative or motor reaction becomes a psychical trauma.” (S. Freud, 1892. Italics added.)

In the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895a) Freud spoke of the “principle of neuronic inertia” that asserts that “neurons tend to divest themselves of Q. On this basis the structure and development as well as the functions (of neurons) are to be understood.” (Freud, 1895a.) What Freud means by Q is not entirely clear. He defines it in this paper as “what distinguishes activity from rest,” (Freud, 1895a.)[32] meaning nervous energy.[33] At any rate, one is on safe ground in saying that in those early years lies the beginning of what Freud later called the principle of “constancy,” or implying the reduction of all nervous activity to a minimal level. Twenty-five years later, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud stated the principle in psychological terms as follows: “The mental apparatus endeavours to keep the quantity of excitation present in it *as low as possible or at least to keep it constant*.” (S. Freud, 1920. Italics added.) Freud here speaks of the same principle “constancy” or “inertia”—as having two versions: one of keeping excitation constant, the other of reducing it to the lowest possible level. Freud sometimes used either of the two terms denoting one or the other version of the basic principle.[34]

The pleasure principle is based on the constancy principle. Chemically produced libidinous excitation needs to be reduced to its normal level; this principle of keeping tension constant governs the functioning of the nervous apparatus. Tension that has risen above its regular level is felt as “unpleasure,” its reduction to the constant level as “pleasure.” “The facts which have caused us to believe in the dominance of the pleasure principle also find expression in the hypothesis that the mental apparatus endeavours to keep the quantity of excitation present in it as low as possible, or, at least to keep it constant… *The pleasure principle follows from the principle of constancy*.” (S. Freud, 1920. Italics added.) Unless one understands Freud’s axiom of tension reduction, one will never understand his position, which was not centered around the concept of a hedonistic striving for pleasure, but rather on the assumption of the physiological necessity to reduce tension and with it—psychically—unpleasure. The pleasure principle is based on keeping excitation at a certain constant level. But the principle of constancy implies *also* the tendency to keep excitation on a *minimal* level;

in this version it becomes the basis for the death instinct. As Freud stated it: “The dominating tendency of mental life, and perhaps of nervous life in general, is the effort to reduce, to keep constant, or to remove internal tension due to stimuli (the Nirvana principle, to borrow a term from Barbara Law)—a tendency which finds expression in the pleasure principle; and our recognition of that fact is one of our strongest reasons for believing in the existence of death instincts.” (S. Freud, 1920.)

Freud arrives at this point at an almost untenable position; the principles of constancy, inertia, Nirvana, are identical; the principle of tension reduction governs the sexual instinct (in terms of the pleasure principle) and is at the same time the essence of the death instinct. Considering that Freud ascribes to the death instinct not only self-destruction but also destruction against others, he would arrive at the paradox that the pleasure principle and the destructive instinct owe their existence to the same principle. Freud, quite naturally, could not be satisfied with such an idea, especially since it would correspond to a monistic rather than the dualistic model of conflicting forces which Freud never gave up. Four years later Freud wrote in the *Economic Problem of Masochism*:

> But we have unhesitatingly identified the pleasure-unpleasure principle with this Nirvana principle… The Nirvana principle (and the pleasure principle which is supposedly identical with it) would be entirely in the service of the death instincts, whose aim is to conduct the restlessness of life into the stability of the inorganic state, and it would have the function of giving warnings against the demands of the life instincts—the libido—which try to disturb the intended course of life. *But such a view cannot be correct.* (S. Freud, 1924. Italics added.)

In order to prove the incorrectness of this view Freud takes a step that ordinary expedience would have recommended from the very beginning. He wrote:

> It seems that in the series of feelings of tension we have a direct sense of the increase and decrease of amounts of stimulus, and it cannot be doubted that there are pleasurable tensions and unpleasurable relaxations of tension. The state of sexual excitation is the most

> striking example of a pleasurable increase of stimulus of this sort, bin it is certainly not the only one.
>
> Pleasure and unpleasure, therefore, cannot be referred to an increase or decrease of a quantity (which we describe as “tension due to stimulus”), although they obviously have a great deal to do with that factor. It appears that they depend, not on this quantitative factor, but on some characteristic of it which we can only describe as a qualitative one. If we were able to say what this qualitative characteristic is, we should be much further advanced in psychology. Perhaps it is the rhythm, the temporal sequence of changes, rises and falls in the quantity of stimulus. We do not know. (S. Freud, 1924.)

However, Freud did not pursue this thought any further, although he seemed not to be satisfied with this explanation. Instead he offered another one that is meant to overcome the danger of the identification of pleasure with destruction. He continued:

> However this may be, we must recognize that the Nirvana principle, belonging as it does to the death instinct, has undergone a modification in living organisms through which it has become the pleasure principle; and we shall henceforward avoid regarding the two principles as one… The *Nirvana* principle expresses the trend of the death instinct; the *pleasure* principle represents the demands of the libido; and the modification of the latter principle, the *reality* principle represents the influence of the external world. (S. Freud, 1924.)

It seems that this explanation is a theoretical fiat rather than an explanation for the assertion that the pleasure principle and the death instinct are not identical.

While Freud’s attempt to extricate himself from a paradoxical position is, in my opinion, unsuccessful, although most brilliant, the important problem at this point is not whether he succeeded or not. It is, rather, that Freud’s whole psychological thinking from the very beginning to the end was dominated by the axiom that the principle of reduction of excitation was the governing principle of all psychic and nervous life.

We know the origins of this axiom. Freud himself quoted G. T. Fechner (1873) as the father of this idea. He wrote:

We cannot, however, remain indifferent to the discovery that an investigator of such penetration as G. T. Fechner held a view on the subject of pleasure and unpleasure which coincides in all essentials with the one that has been forced upon us by psychoanalytic work. Fechner's statement is to be found contained in a small work, Einige *Ideen zur Schöpfungs—und Entwicklungsgeschichte der Organismen*, 1873 (Part XI, Supplement, 94) and reads as follows: "In so far as conscious impulses always have some relation to pleasure or unpleasure, pleasure and unpleasure too can be regarded as having a psycho-physical relation to conditions of stability and instability. This provides a basis for a hypothesis into which I propose to enter in greater detail elsewhere. According to this hypothesis, every psycho-physical motion rising above the threshold of consciousness is attended by pleasure in proportion as, beyond a certain limit, it approximates to complete stability, and is attended by unpleasure in proportion as, beyond a certain limit, it deviates from complete stability; while between the two limits, which may be described as qualitative thresholds of pleasure and unpleasure, there is a certain margin of aesthetic indifference…[35]

The facts which have caused us to believe in the dominance of the pleasure principle in mental life also find expression in the hypothesis that the mental apparatus endeavours to keep the quantity of excitation present in it as low as possible or at least to keep it constant. This later hypothesis is only another way of stating the pleasure principle; for if the work of the mental apparatus is directed towards keeping the quantity of excitation low, then anything that is calculated to increase that quantity is bound to be felt as adverse to the functioning of the apparatus, that is as unpleasurable. The pleasure principle follows from the principle of constancy; actually the latter principle was inferred from the facts which forced us to adopt the pleasure principle. Moreover, a more detailed discussion will show that the tendency which we thus attribute to the mental apparatus is subsumed as a special case under Fechner's principle of the "tendency towards stability," to which he has brought the feelings of pleasure and unpleasure into relation. (S. Freud, 1920.)

But Fechner was by no means the only representative of the principle of tension reduction. Stimulated by the energy concept of physics, the concept of energy and energy conservation became popular among physiologists. If Freud was influenced by these physical theories, they would have seemed to imply that the death instinct was only one particular instance of the general physical law. But the fallacy of such a conclusion becomes apparent if we consider the difference between inorganic and organic matter. René Dubos has expressed this point very succinctly. He wrote:

> According to one of the most fundamental laws of physics, the universal tendency in the world of matter is for everything to run downhill, to fall to the lowest possible level of tension, with constant loss of potential energy and of organization. In contrast, life constantly creates and maintains order out of the randomness of matter. To apprehend the deep significance of this fact one need only think what happens to any living organism—the very smallest as well as the largest and most evolved—when finally it dies. (R. Dubos, 1962.)

Two English writers, R. Kapp (1931) and L. S. Penrose (1931) have criticized the attempts of some authors to connect physical theory with the death instinct so convincingly that one "must finally dispose of the idea that there could be any relationship between entropy and the death instinct."[36]

Whether or not Freud had in mind the connection between entropy and the death instinct does not matter too much. Even if he did not, the whole principle of excitation and energy reduction to the lowest minimal level rests upon the basic error that Dubos points to in the above quotation; the error of ignoring the fundamental difference between life and non-life, between "organisms" and "things."

In order to get away from laws valid only for organic matter, in later years another analogy has been preferred to that of entropy, namely the concept of "homeostasis" as developed by Walter B. Cannon (1963). But Jones and others who see in this concept an analogy to Freud's Nirvana principle confuse the two principles. Freud speaks of the tendency to abolish—or reduce—excitation. Cannon, on the other hand, and many later investigators, speak of the necessity of keeping a relatively stable inner environment. This stability implies that the inner environment tends to remain stable, but not that it tends to reduce energy to the minimal point.

The confusion apparently arises because of the ambiguity of the words "stability" and "constancy." A simple example can demonstrate the fallacy. If the temperature of a room is to be kept at a stable or constant level via a thermostat, it means it should neither go above nor below a certain level; if, however, the tendency were that the temperature should be on a minimal level, it would be an entirely different matter; in fact, the homeostatic principle of stability contradicts the Nirvana principle of total or relative energy reduction.

There seems to be little doubt that Freud's basic axiom of tension reduction, which is father both of the pleasure principle and of the death instinct, owes its existence to the thinking characteristic of German mechanistic materialism. It was not clinical experience that suggested this concept to Freud; Freud's deep attachment to the physiological theories of his teachers saddled him and later psychoanalysis with the "axiom." It forced clinical observation and the resulting formulation of theory into the narrow framework of tension reduction, which could hardly be squared with the wealth of data showing that man, at all ages, seeks excitation, stimulation, relations of love and friendship, is eager to increase his relatedness to the world; in short, man seems to be motivated just as much by the principle of tension increase as by that of tension reduction. But although many psychoanalysts were impressed by the limited validity of tension reduction, they did not change their fundamental position and tried to muddle along with a peculiar mixture of Freud's metapsychological concepts and the logic of their clinical data.

Perhaps the puzzle of Freud's self-deception about the validity of the concept of the death instinct requires still another element for its solution. Every careful reader of Freud's work must also be aware how tentatively and cautiously he treated his new theoretical constructions when presenting them for the first time. He made no claim for their validity and sometimes even spoke deprecatingly of their value. But the more time passed, the more hypothetical constructs turned into theories upon which new constructions and theories were built. Freud the theorist was very well aware of the doubtful validity of many of his constructs. Why did he forget these original doubts? It is hard to answer this question; one possible answer may be found in his role as the leader of the psychoanalytic movement.[37] Those of his students who dared to criticize fundamental aspects of his theories left him or were squeezed out in one way or another. Those who built the

movement were mostly pedestrian men, from the standpoint of their theoretical capacity, and it would have been difficult for them to follow Freud through basic theoretical changes. They needed a dogma in which they believed and around which they could organize the movement.[38] Thus Freud the scientist became to some extent the prisoner of Freud the leader of the movement; or to put it differently. Freud the teacher became the prisoner of his faithful, but uncreative disciples.

[1]For the evolution of Freud's theory of aggression cf. also J. Strachey's summary in the editor's Introduction to *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Freud, 1930).

[2]In this statement we find 1n expression of Freud's general axiom of tension reduction as the fundamental law of nervous functioning. Cf. the detailed discussion of this axiom at the end of this Appendix.

[3]In the further development of this concept Freud tends to speak more of *a* life instinct (Eros) and *a* death instinct.

[4]To go into the details of Freud's attempt to identify Eros and sexuality would require a whole chapter by itself and be interesting probably only to the specialized student of Freud's theory.

[5]Freud's reference here is to Section 11 of his first paper on anxiety neurosis. (Freud, 1895.)

[6]In this formulation the basic conflict in man *seems* to be that between egotism and altruism. In Freud's theory of Id and Ego (pleasure principle and reality principle) both sides of the polarity are egotistic: satisfaction of one's own libidinal needs and satisfaction of one's need for self-preservation.

[7]In fact, Freud alternated between this view and the one that the id was the seat, or "reservoir" of the libido. J. Strachey, the editor of the *Standard Edition* has given a detailed history of these vacillations throughout the whole of Freud's work. See Appendix B to *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1923).

[8]Freud combines here three very difficult tendencies. The instinct to destroy is basically different from the will for power: in the first case I want to destroy the object: in the second, I want to keep and control it, and both are entirely different from the drive for mastery, whose aim it is to create and produce, which in fact is the precise opposite of the will to destroy.

[9]Freud arrived at this conclusion on the basis of the following argument: "The clue may be supplied by Line of the ideal demands, as we have called them, of civilized society. It runs: 'Thou shalt love

thy neighbor as thyself.' It is known throughout the world and is undoubtedly older than Christianity, which puts it forward as its proudest claim. Yet it is certainly not very old; even in historical times it was still strange to mankind. Let us adopt a naive attitude towards it, as though we were hearing it for the first time; we shall be unable then to suppress a feeling of surprise and bewilderment. Why should we do it? What good will it do us? But, above all, how shall we achieve it? How can it be possible? My love is something valuable to me which I ought not to throw away without reflection. It imposes duties on me for whose fulfillment I must be ready to make sacrifices. If I lore someone, he must deserve it in some way. (I leave out of account the use he may be to me, and also his possible significance for me as a sexual object, for neither of these two kinds of relationships comes into question where the precept to love my neighbor is concerned.) He deserves it if he is so like me in important ways that I can love myself in him; and he deserves it if he is so much more perfect than myself that I can love my ideal of my own self in him. Again, I have to love him if he is my friend's son, since the pain my friend would feel if any harm came to him would be my pain too—I should have to share it. But if he is a stranger to me and if he cannot attract me by any worth of his own or any significance that he may already have acquired for my emotional life, it will be hard for me to love him. Indeed, I should be wrong to do so, for my love is valued by all my own people as a sign of my preferring them, and it is an injustice to them if I put a stranger on a par with them. But if I am to love him (with this universal love) merely because he, too, is an inhabitant of this earth, like an insect, an earth-worm or a grass-snake, then I fear that only a small modicum of my love will fall to his share—not by any possibility as much as, by the judgment of my reason. I am entitled to retain for myself." (S. Freud, 1930). It is interesting to note how Freud conceived of love entirely in the frame of reference of bourgeois ethics, specifically the social character of the middle class of the nineteenth century. The first question is: "What good will it do us?"—the principle of profit. The next premise is that love must be "deserved" (the patriarchal principle in contrast to the matriarchal principle of unconditional and undeserved love and, furthermore, on the narcissistic principle that the other "deserves" my love only inasmuch as he is like me in important ways; even loving one's friend's son is explained in egoistic terms, because if harm came to him and thus indirectly to my friend his pain would be my pain. Eventually love is conceived as a certain quantitatively fixed amount, love for all my fellow creatures could only leave a very small amount of love for each one.

[10]Cf. also S. Freud (1908d).

[11]The dependence of Freud's theory formation on the thinking of his teachers has been described by Peter Ammacher (1962). Robert R. Holt (1965, p. 94) summarizes approvingly the main thesis of Ammacher's work in the following: "Many of the most puzzling and seemingly arbitrary turns of psychoanalytic theory, involving propositions that are false to the extent that they are testable at all, are either hidden biological assumptions or result directly from such assumptions, which Freud

learned from his teachers in medical school. They became a basic part of his intellectual equipment, as unquestioned as the assumption of the universal determinism, were probably not always recognized by him as biological, and thus were retained as necessary ingredients when he attempted to turn away from neurologizing to the construction of an abstract, psychological model."

[12]Cf. J. Pratt (1958)

[13]Freud's terminology is not always consistent. He speaks sometimes of life and death instincts, sometimes of a life and death instinct (singular). The death instinct(s) is also called destructive instinct(s). The word *thanatos* (parallel to Eros), as an equivalent to death instinct, was not used by Freud, but was introduced into the discussion by P. Federn.

[14]Cf. for instance, S. Freud, 1930a

[15]The use of "Nirvana principle" is unfortunate inasmuch as it misinterprets the Buddhist Nirvana. Nirvana is precisely not a state of lifelessness brought about by nature (which, according to Buddhism, has the opposite tendency), but by the spiritual effort of man who finds salvation and the completion of life if he has succeeded in overcoming all greed and egoism and is filled with compassion for all sentient beings. In the state of Nirvana the Buddha experienced supreme joy.

[16]Freud does not pay attention to the fact that the destructive instinct aims at the destruction of the object, while sadism wants to keep it in order to control, humiliate or hurt it. Cf. the discussion of sadism in chapter 11.

[17]Later on I shall try to show that there is, indeed, a possible connection between the libido theory and the theory of the death instinct through the link of the theory of anal libido.

[18]In a footnote Freud quotes a similar idea from the Brihadâramyaka Upanishad.

[19]As, for instance, John Stuart Mill, J. J. Bachofen, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and quite a few others had done.

[20]This process occurs in many great creative thinkers. Spinoza is a striking example. The problem, for instance, whether Spinoza was a theist or not cannot be fully understood unless one takes into account the difference between his conscious thought habits (in theistic terms), the new vision (nontheistic), and the resulting compromise of a definition of God that is, in fact, a denial of God. This method of examining an author's writings is psychoanalytic in some important respects. One reads between the lines of the written text as a psychoanalyst reads between the lines of a patient's

free associations or dreams. The starting point is the fact that we find contradictions in the thought of an eminent thinker. Since he would have noticed these contradictions himself, and probably would have solved them were it a matter of theoretical talent, we must assume that the immanent contradictions are caused by the conflict between two structures. The old one, which still occupies most of the conscious territory, and a radically new one, which does not succeed in expressing itself fully in conscious thought; that is to say, part of which remains unconscious. The immanent contradiction can be treated like a symptom or a dream, as a compromise between an older structure of effectively rooted conscious thought and a new structure of a theoretical vision that cannot be expressed fully because of the strength of old ideas and feelings. The author, even if he is a genius, may be entirely unaware of the existence or nature of these contradictions, while an outsider—not caught in the same premises—may see them very easily. Kant was, perhaps, referring to this when he noted: "Sometimes we understand the author better than the author understands himself."

[21]Ernst Simmel has suggested precisely such a solution. (E. Simmel, 1944.)

[22]The affinity between anality and necrophilia is discussed in chapter 12. I mention there that the typical necrophilic dream is full of symbols like feces, corpses—whole or dismembered—tombs, ruins, etc., and include examples of such necrophilous dreams.

[23]Cf., for instance, *Civilized Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness* where Freud wrote: "We may justly hold our civilization responsible for the threat of neurasthenia." (S. Freud, 1908a)

[24]Herbert Marcuse makes the point that Freud said that full happiness requires the full expression of all sexual instincts (which in Freud's sense would mean particularly the pregenital components). (H. Marcuse, 1955.) Regardless of whether Freud is right in his opinion, Marcuse overlooks the fact that Freud's main point was that of the tragic alternatives. Hence, it is not at all a Freudian view that the goal should be the unlimited expression of all components of the sexual instinct. On the contrary, Freud—being on the side of civilization against barbarism prefers repression to its opposite. Besides, Freud always spoke of the repressive influence of *civilization* on the instincts, and the idea that this happens only in capitalism and need not happen in socialism is completely contrary to his thinking. Marcuse's ideas on this subject suffer from insufficient knowledge of the details of Freud's theory.

[25]Freud's concept of conscience as essentially punishing is surely a very narrow one, in the tradition of certain religious ideas; it is that of an "authoritarian," not a "humanistic" conscience. Cf. E. Fromm (1947a).

[26]Freud did not in general use the term *sublimation* in connection with the death instinct, but it seems to me that the concept with which the following paragraph deals is the same as that which Freud calls

sublimation in relation to the libido. The concept of "sublimation," however, is questionable even when Freud applied it to sexual, and especially to pregenital, instincts. In terms of the older theory, the example was popular that a surgeon uses the sublimated energy of his sadism. But is this really true? After all, the surgeon does not only cut, he also mends; and it is more likely that the best surgeons are not motivated by sublimated sadism, but by many other factors, such as having manual dexterity, the wish to heal through immediate action, the capacity for making quick decisions. et cetera.

[27]Cf. S. Freud (1930), as well as sources quoted in the editor's Introduction to that paper.

[28]I gratefully acknowledge the very helpful summary of all Freud's views on "organic repression" by the editor of the *Standard Edition*, James Strachey, in his Introduction to *Civilization and Its Discontents*. (Freud, 1930.) This acknowledgment is also extended to all his other introductions, which enable the reader, even if well acquainted with Freud's work, to locate more quickly a quotation he is searching for, and beyond that, to recall out-of-the-way quotations he has forgotten. Needless to say that for the student less familiar with Freud's work, they are also a most helpful guide.

[29]What speaks most against Freud's assumption is that prehistoric man was not more but less aggressive than civilized man.

[30]I want to point out once more the change in Freud's view concerning the relationship between instinct and civilization. In terms of the libido theory, civilization results in the repression of *sexual* strivings and may cause *neurosis*. In the new theory, civilization leads to the holding back of *aggressiveness* and results in *physical illness*.

[31]The similarities between Empedocles' and Freud's concepts are perhaps not as real as they appear at first glance. For Empedocles, Love is attraction between dissimilars; Strife is attraction of like to like. A serious comparison requires the examination of Empedocles' whole system. (Cf. W. K. C. Guthrie, 1965.)

[32]For a detailed discussion of the meaning of "Q" cf. J. Strachey, *Standard Edition*, vol. 3, Appendix C.

[33] Cf. J. Strachey's explanatory notes to vol. 3 of the *Standard Edition*. Strachey stresses the fact that the concept of psychical energy is nowhere to be found in the Project, while it is in common use in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Furthermore, Strachey calls attention to the fact that traces of the old neurological background are to be found in Freud's writings long after he had accepted the concept of

a psychical—as distinguished from the physical—energy; even as late as 1915, in the paper on *The Unconscious* Freud speaks of "nervous" rather than of psychical energy. Strachey states that, in fact, "many major characteristics of Q survived in a transmogrified shape to the very end of Freud's writings" (vol. 1, p. 345). Freud himself came to the conclusion that we did not know the answer to what Q is. He wrote in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: "The indefiniteness of all our discussions on what we describe as metapsychology is of course due to the fact that we know nothing of the nature of the excitatory process that takes place in the elements of the psychical systems, and that we do not feel justified in framing any hypothesis on the subject. We are consequently operating all the time with a large unknown factor, which we are obliged to carry over into every new formula." (S. Freud, 1920.)

[34]J. Bowlby, in his excellent discussion of this problem, states that originally Freud considered the principle of inertia as primary and that of constancy as secondary. The reading of the relevant passages leads me to a different assumption that seems also to correspond to J. Strachey's interpretation. (Cf. J. Bowlby, 1969.

[35]Freud stated in *The Ego and the Id*: "If it is true that Fechner's principle of constancy governs life, which thus consists of a continuous descent towards death…" (S. Freud, 1923.) This "descent towards death" is not to be found in Fechner's statement; it is Freud's special version of an enlargement of Fechner's principle.

[36]E Jones (1957). Cf. the literature quoted by Jones, especially S. Bernfield and S. Feitelberg (1930). Cf. also K. H. Pilbram (1962).

[37]Cf. E. Fromm (1959a).

[38]This is borne out by the reaction of the majority of Freudians to the death instinct. They could not follow this new and profound speculation and found a way out by formulating Freud's ideas about aggression in terms of the old instinct theory.

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A Biography of Erich Fromm

Erich Fromm (1900–1980) was a German-American psychoanalyst, sociologist, and democratic socialist best known for his classic works *Escape from Freedom* (1941) and *The Art of Loving* (1956), and for his early association with the Frankfurt School of critical theory. He is commonly considered one of the most influential and popular psychoanalysts in America, and his works have sold multi-millions of copies throughout the world in many languages.

Fromm was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, the only child of Naphtali Fromm, a wine merchant, and Rosa Fromm (née Krause). His parents were devout Orthodox Jews, and Fromm spent much of his youth studying the Talmud. Though he renounced practicing his religion at the age of twenty-six, Fromm's view of the world remained profoundly shaped by Orthodox Judaism and its rejection of assimilation with the mainstream.

Fromm's interest in ethics and legal issues led him first to study law at Frankfurt University and, starting in 1919, sociology under Alfred Weber (brother to Max Weber) in Heidelberg. In his 1922 dissertation, Fromm examined the function of Jewish law in three diaspora communities. Introduced by his friend (and later wife) Frieda Reichmann, Fromm became interested in the ideas of Sigmund Freud and started to develop his own theories and methods to understand social phenomena in a psychoanalytic way.

After completing his psychoanalytic training in 1930, Fromm began his own clinical practice in Berlin. By then he was also working with the Institute for Social Research, affiliated with the University of Frankfurt, where a circle of critical theorists around Max Horkheimer became known as the Frankfurt School.

Following the Nazi takeover, Fromm settled in the United States in 1934. Many of his colleagues from the Institute for Social Research had gone into exile in New York City, joining Fromm. He then taught at several American schools and became a US citizen in 1940.

In 1941 *Escape from Freedom* was published and Fromm started lecturing at the New School for Social Research. He was cofounder of the William Alanson White Institute in New York, and in 1944 he married Henny Gurland, a fellow emigré.

In 1950 Fromm moved to Mexico City, where the climate would better suit his wife's health problems, and he became a professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Despite the move, Henny died in 1952, and Fromm married Annis Freeman in 1953.

Mexican Institute of Psychoanalysis, where he served as director until 1973. Following his retirement, Fromm made Muralto, Switzerland, his permanent home until his death.

Fromm published books known for their socio-political and social psychoanalytic groundwork. His works include *Escape from Freedom* (1941), *Man for Himself* (1947), *The Sane Society* (1955), *The Art of Loving* (1956), *The Heart of Man* (1964) *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973) and *To Have or To Be?* (1976).

By applying his social-psychoanalytic approach to cultural and social phenomena, Fromm analyzed authoritarianism in Hitler's Germany; in the United States he described the "marketing character," which motivates people to fulfill the requirements of the market and results in increased self-alienation.

In addition to his merits as a "psychoanalyst of society" and as a social scientist Fromm always stressed the productive powers of man: reason and love. This humanistic attitude pervades his understanding of religion, his vision of the art of living and his idea of a "sane" society.

With photography becoming popular at the turn of the twentieth century, young Fromm's picture was often taken.

Fromm and his mother, Rosa Fromm, around 1906.

Fromm's childhood home at 27 Liebigstrasse in Frankfurt.

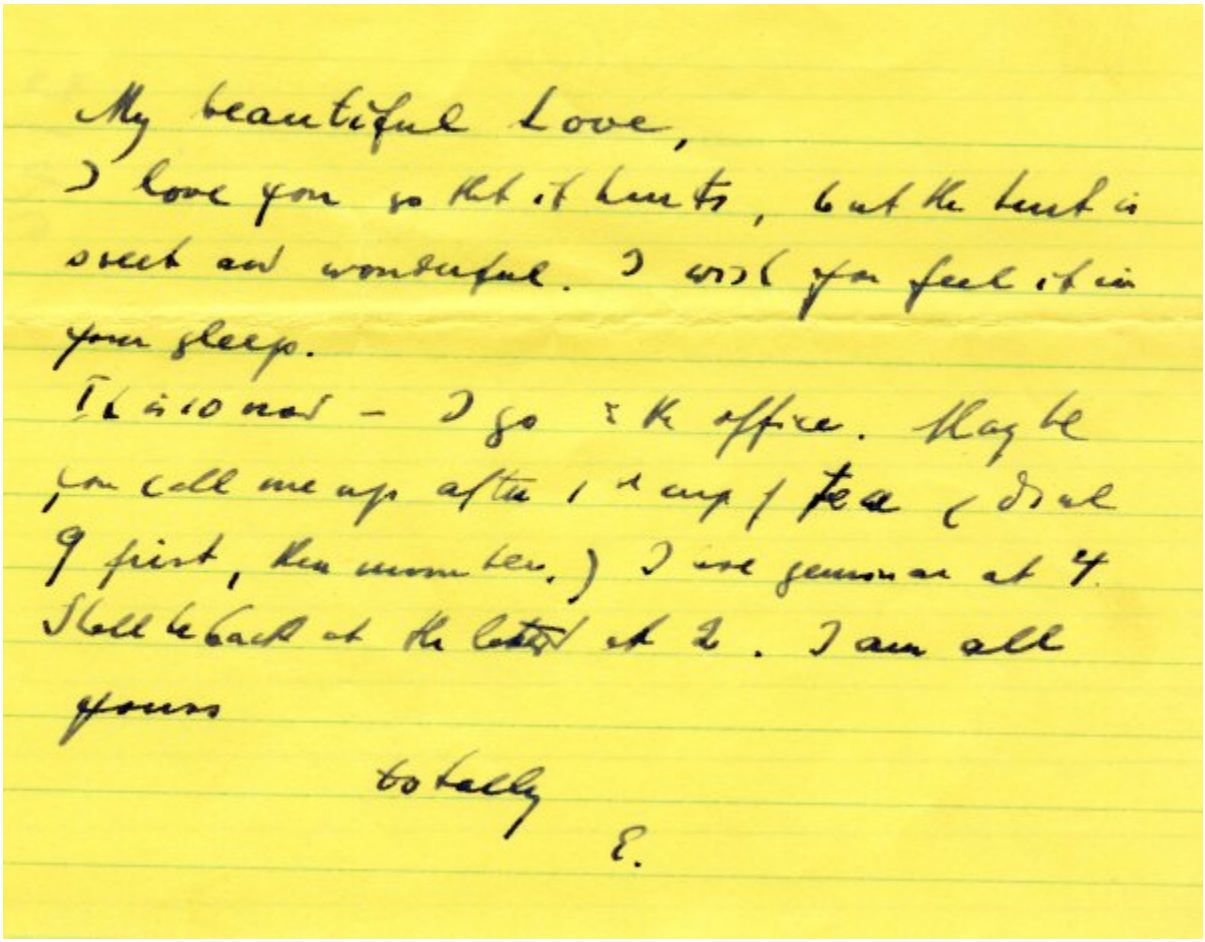
Thirteen-year-old Fromm and his father, Naphtali Fromm, celebrate Hanukkah.

A complete Fromm family picture taken in Germany during Fromm's Wöhlerschule student days.

The Association of Zionist students in the summer of 1919. Fromm is in the first row, third from the left.

Fromm and his second wife, Henny Gurland-Fromm, in Bennington, Vermont, in 1946, where they lived part-time until Henny's declining health prompted them to move to Mexico.

Fromm made it a priority to meditate and to analyze his dreams every day. Here he is meditating in his home in Cuernavaca, ca. 1965.



My beautiful Love,
I love you so that it hurts, but the hurt is sweet and wonderful. I wish you feel it in your sleep.
Tuesday – I go to office. Maybe you call me up after 1 cup / tea (Dial 9 first, then number.) I will be home at 4. Shall be back at the latest at 2. I am all yours
totally
E.

After his wife's passing in 1952, Fromm found love again with Annis Freeman. Here is a message Fromm wrote to Annis during their marriage.

A picture of Fromm and his third wife, Annis at the end of the 1950s in Cuernavaca. They were married for twenty-eight years, until Fromm's death in 1980.

Fromm and his students in Chiconuac, Mexico, where, in the sixties, they planned a socio-psychological field-research project.

Though Fromm suffered from several heart attacks during his later years, he was able to smile until the end of his life. The photo was taken two weeks before he died, in 1980.

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To Have or To Be?
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First published as volume 50 of "World Perspectives," planned and edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen, (Harper and Row, New York) 1976.
In his personal copy of this book Fromm brought in some corrections and improvements of the text which are included here.

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First published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1973.
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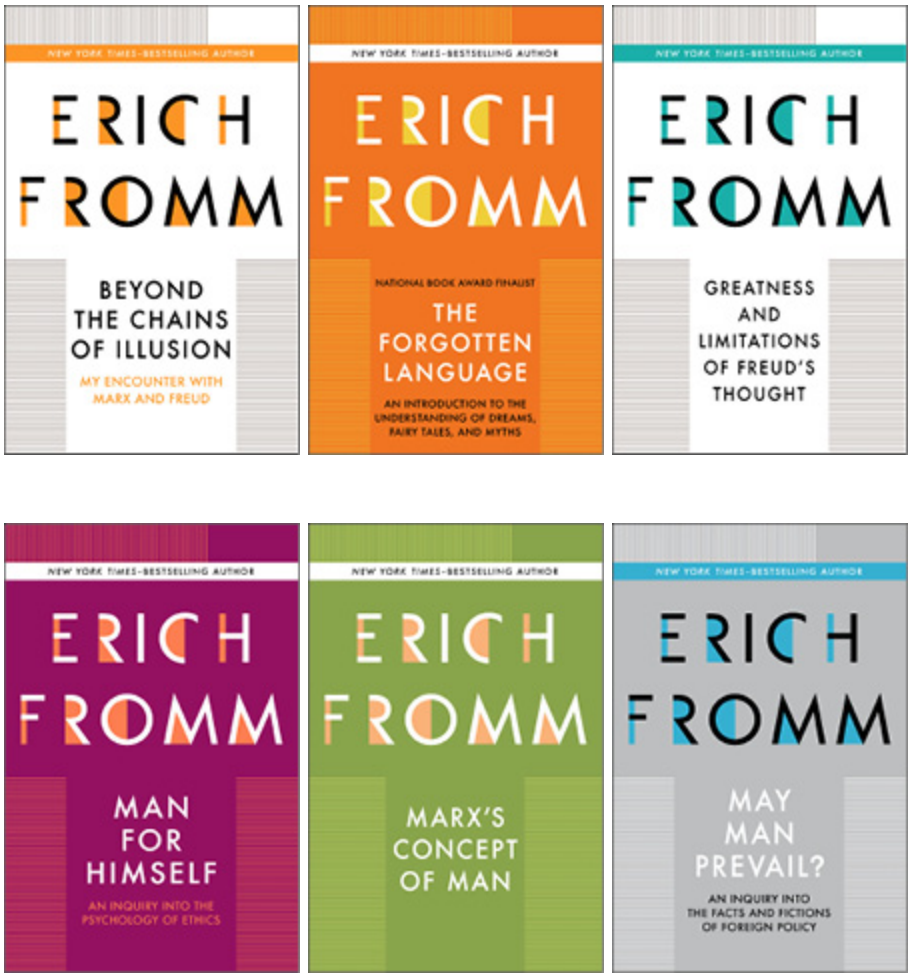
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